URBAN DESIGN VISION FOR THE VISTA DEL SOL DEVELOPMENT

CITY OF COACHELLA

June 2016

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1 Introduction

1 Introduction

The idea of this project arose from the lack of development on the site. The site is centrally located in the downtown area in the City of Coachella. The site is important because it is the gateway to the City's historic, but un-popular, downtown. A vision for this specific site is needed to encourage development that fits the needs of the community and will also contribute positively to the overall appearance of the City of Coachella.

As a Coachella resident, I have lived th rough the various stages of development to adjacent sites, and along with many residents, I am not pleased by what has been developed. This project focuses on the corner of 6th St. and Harrison (or Highway 86); the western portion of the Downtown that consists of vacant land. The project is intended to bring business and life back to the historic downtown, and also enhance the quality of life for residents of the City, neighbors, and visitors as well. The goal is to create a gathering place for retail, commercial, dining, and entertainment activity for residents, businesses, and visitors throughout the area, while developing neighborhood serving commercial uses and residential units. To achieve such goals, the project envisions to incorporate smart growth elements such as pedestrian-friendly design, multi-modal transportation and mixed-use development.

1.2 Organization of the Report

This report is divided into three major sections that include subtopics. The first section of this report focuses on the historical and important elements that relate to the site from a larger perspective. It analyses downtowns and the city of Coachella; it starts with a historical overview then finalizes on prospective important information and explanations. The second section discusses the physical and social attributes of the project site and surrounding area. It also starts with a historical overview and then focuses on the regulatory setting that impacts the site. The report concludes with the concept development for the site. It begins analyzing the urban design qualities and relevant case studies, and then through the eyes of them, the vision and design proposal is formulated.

2 LEARNING FROM DOWNTOWNS

2 LEARNING FROM DOWNTOWNS

The following literature review is intended to provide background information on downtowns. Downtown information is important for the development of the Vista Del Sol project because it is located at the easternmost edge of the City of Coachella's downtown. It is important to understand and draw upon the history of downtowns in order to have a solid building block for downtown revitalization. This section is divided into five topic areas: (1) formation of downtown, (2) Development of Downtown, (3) Decline of Downtown and Flight to the Suburbs, (4) Importance of Downtowns, and (5) section summary.

2.1 Formation of Downtowns

The formation of the American downtown is an antecedent of the European central business district. The European central business district originated during the later decades of the seventeenth century, but developed very slowly in comparison to the American downtown (Ford, 2003). In America, the downtown evolved more quickly because most of the components were in place as cities were first organized (Ford, 2003). Most generally American cities were developed along major transportation axis such as railroads, main roads, which was the common setting for a downtown. American downtowns, Rather than clinging to a plaza or cathedral, prestigious economic activities sought a location on the "main street" (Ford, 2003).

American downtowns tended to be street-oriented rather than place-oriented. Their location was determined by transportation and accessibility; locations tended to be accessible to people coming on foot, on horseback, or over water routes (Cook, 1980). Transportation axis typically bisected the city, increasing the downtown's accessibility and often forming the cities' historic focal point. By 1900, this process had established downtowns as disputed centers of retail trade, services, finance, government and culture (Cook, 1980). They originally arose as market places where people came together to barter and sell goods (Ford, 2003). Main streets in larger cities were centers of highly concentrated activity, and the homes and coffeehouses of the city's elite (Ford, 2003). Downtowns rapidly became defined by office buildings and special purpose stores. They were characterized by physical compactness, relatively low buildings, and a laissez-faire' attitude towards development. However, though cities had begun to develop public-park systems in the latter half of the 1800s, development varied greatly being the byproduct of decisions determined by economic consideration. Early planners were able to dictate if land uses were appropriate, and if they were no longer seen as appropriate they were pushed out (Ford, 2003).

Downtowns continued to form and expand as more specialty services and the development of cultural activities moved downtown (Cook, 1980). The downtown area generally consisted the highest land values in the city because they contained the full spectrum of economic functions. With the increase of functions, cities began to allocate special districts for government buildings,

banks, open space, entertainment and retail. The division of functions divided and segregated tenants on the basis of rent prices and type of activities. Depending on the popularity of the downtown, they supported the increase the division of land to accommodate to the desired social and physical characteristics. In many cases, downtowns moved into surrounding areas, extending the core to adjacent streets. But as construction technology improved, density also increased, decreasing the need for division of land.

Soon after 1900 there were two significant developments that were to have a profound and lasting effect on the physical form and quality of the social environment of downtowns (Cook, 1980). The combination of technological breakthroughs such as geared elevators and steel framing allowed skyscrapers to be built to never before seen heights (Cook, 1980). This gave birth to high rise building and permitted the concentration of large numbers of people in small land areas. In conjunction with higher density, the development of the automobile also became a primary concern and formed downtowns to meet their needs.

2.2 Development of Downtowns

After the formation of the downtown, downtowns of all scales witnessed periods that changed the way in which how cities were planned, developed and designed. According to Larry Ford, there are three significant periods that epitomize the golden era in the development of American downtowns; the City Beautiful Era (1910), the Roaring Twenties (1928), and the Booming Fifties (1950). During these eras downtowns flourished and represented the heart of the cityscape.

The City Beautiful Era, inspired by the Chicago World's fair inspired cities and downtowns in America to construct beautiful and orderly cities with wealthy open spaces and public buildings. In pursuit of inspiring morality and civic virtue within them. Large cities across America built and designed grand, monumental civic-centers complete with city halls, libraries, opera houses, fountains, grassy malls, and grand boulevards (Ford, 2003). The movement inspired downtowns to take European baroque embellishments, to avoid the "thrown together" downtowns of the nineteenth century (Ford, 2003). During this era, revived the notion of grand parkways on the edges of older downtown grids. Additionally, it was perhaps the first "golden age" of civic open space with the idea of a "civic center" with grand public buildings of a variety of kinds (Ford, 2003).

In addition to grand planning, this era featured variety of new and exciting urban features impacting development in downtowns. Electric streetcars, electric lights, early skyscrapers complete with speedy elevators, palatial vaudeville houses, grand apartment buildings, and a number of other novel attractions were developed during this era (Ford, 2003). The expansion of streetcar systems into suburban neighborhoods coincided with the establishment of cultural centers. And as a result, museums, theaters, and galleries were often located in parklike settings well away from the grimy workaday world of downtown (Ford, 2003). Changing the

demographics of the downtown by allowing people to move to nearby suburbs. Despite some of the leaking effects of the new technology during this era, the City Beautiful Era impacted downtown development, and nearly every American City benefited from the notions of good planning and civic identity (Ford, 2003).

The next period in the Golden Era for downtowns is during the roaring twenties. During this era a building boom was under way, leading to some of the tallest towers, biggest movie houses, most luxurious apartment buildings, and largest department stores ever constructed in cities (Ford, 2003). Until this era most mid-sized downtowns did not have skyscrapers and huge hotels (Ford, 2003). The development of skyscrapers made downtowns more compact, while at the same time they grew in size and importance. Thanks to the technological breakthroughs such as geared elevators and steel frame special-purpose architecture was perfected, (Ford, 2003). Buildings became larger and more specialized, and land uses became more segregated and people had to travel longer distances to work or shop. In addition electric lights, central heating, and escalators allowed huge department stores to be constructed so that vast interior spaces could be comfortably used by hordes of people. As buildings became more specialized, activities were located according to their ability to pay; the rent gradient arrived in full force (Ford, 2003). These patterns of development were institutionalized by zoning regulations, and assisted by the increasing ability to travel farther.

During this era transportation options were greater than ever with streetcars, motor buses, commuter trains, automobiles, and in few cities, elevated trains and subways offering ways in and out of the city (Ford, 2003). Streetcars were the main mode of transportation into American downtowns, however many downtowns were as large as the entire city had been a century earlier and the demand for transit downtown was so great that streets could not accommodate it. City tracks and nodes started to become outdated as motorized transportation increased, especially as automobiles began to be mass produced.

The period just before and after 1950 constitutes the last and greatest period in the American downtown golden era. The American downtown was the king and the return of prosperity and the end of rationing meaning there was money to spend (Ford, 2003). People were shopping and offices were humming; downtowns epitomized nearly everything of economic importance. It was the best place to locate businesses that relied on high visibility and large-threshold populations, were the core was the most prestigious location.

During this period downtown novelty had reached its peak, and began to be remodeled to fit the criteria of the “modern downtown”. However, economic power, technology, and government decisions during this era mark the beginning of set of new cultural values that permanently change the American downtown.

FIG 2.1: Image of Broadway in Los Angeles During the Roaring Twenties

2.2 Downtown Decline and Flight to the Suburbs

During the past century there were significant movements that harmed the liveliness of the downtown, initiating a downward spiral of disinvestment within them. It is evident that the decline of downtowns increased as more people fled to the suburbs, and there are numerous factors that contribute that phenomena. However, perhaps the two factors that had most significant impact in their decline, are the emergence of the automobile and government led actions.

In the 1920s, as automobile use increased tremendously, the first suburban commercial center was planned and developed in Kansas City Missouri. J.C. Nichols was the first to develop a shopping district away from a downtown in the U.S (International Council of Shopping Centers, 2013). His Country Club Plaza opened in 1922, and was constructed as the business district for a large-scale residential development, offering the amenities that were once exclusive to a downtown. This development demonstrated that an inner-city square could be imitated in a metropolitan area, despite the high costs. It was the first development that showcased the potential of the automobile on land development. From this point on, American cities began to develop the powerful physical imprint of automobiles (Meosi n.d.). Soon after, it became clear that centrifugal forces of sprawl, made possible by the automobile and abetted by government policies, drew residents – particularly those with greater buying power – away from downtowns (Cook, 1980).

During this time automobiles were the increasing source of transportation, giving birth to the "recreational vehicle" period which lasted until 1945 (Meosi, n.d.). It allowed for a growing urban periphery supported by a dynamic population growth. It decentralized many cities and molded new urban patterns, and began pushing development further away from downtowns and the core of the city. Downtowns became congested with traffic because their streets were not designed for automobiles. The constant stream of big trucks through the heart of downtown was a major component of the negative image of the congested central city (Ford, 2003). Traffic studies from the 1930s through the 1950s suggested that motorized vehicle travel (along with accidents and congestions) tended to be concentrated on limited trenches of main roads such downtown streets, and reached a peak of six times higher the volume of traffic compared to suburbs (Meosi, n.d.).

After World War II, infrastructure for transportation transformed cities. It destroyed many city cores and downtowns, while suburban and peripheral developments thrived in metropolitan areas. As a consequence there was political and economic pressure to expand the road network. In an attempt connect metropolitan areas with city cores, in 1947, congress authorized a national highway network of 37,000 miles. It intended to help redefine downtown areas as commercial centers accessible to suburban communities (Meosi, n.d.). Likewise, in 1956 the Interstate Highway Act was passed to extend the interstate system by constructing more expressways

and freeways. Its intent was to improve intercity travel, and supporters hoped it would ease downtown congestion (Ford, 2003). However, in order to do so more than $15 billion of the $27 billion spent on highway construction went to urban roadways (Schwager, 1997). The traditional city street was replaced by a number of specialized roads, including: collectors, distributors, arterials, bypasses, relief roads, ring roads, highways, expressways and motorways (Meosi, n.d.). However, the impacts of these two government led acts on cities and downtowns were much greater than that. Rather than relieving congestion, new highways traffic going downtown and further loaded downtown streets. The re-routing of all through traffic to inner and outer belts contributed to the sense of emptiness in some downtowns, especially those with wide streets (Cook, 1980). Additionally, beltways surrounding many cities led development away from them and away from downtown.

FIG 2.2 : Advertisement for the General Motors (GM) pavilion at the New York World's Fair (1939–40). Among the marvels that GM's popular Futurama exhibit predicted included a vast, automobile-oriented suburbia served by a network of superhighways. Within twenty years, the United States was busily concretizing a very similar vision

Also right after WWII, the U.S. initiated the Urban Renewal Program which led to the creation of other government movements that increased the flight to the suburbs. Urban renewal programs sought to solve various issues in America, such as the housing crisis of 1945 and 1946, lack of jobs for returning veterans, and revitalize inner city areas. However, the program was a federally assisted project to redevelop land in areas of moderate to high density such as many American downtowns. It demolished 20 percent of central city housing, most of which were older parts of towns and cities, including central business areas (Lesh, 2009).

The two most significant urban renewal projects are the Gi Bill of 1944 and the Housing Act of 1949. The GI Bill provided state governments with money to educate and build houses for returning soldiers, it guaranteed veteran administration mortgages to veteran under favorable terms. The G.I. Bill assisted Veterans and other Americans demobilized from wartime production that desired housing but were met with a lack of supply. It was a catalyst in fueling the suburbanization of urban regions, transforming farmland into cities. Soldiers were able to avoid the inner city crowdedness, which was complemented by the love for the automobile and the construction of thousands of miles of roadways. The Housing Act of 1949 also increased the flight to the suburbs. It promoted the demolition of residential units within downtowns, and gave the government the right to take privately owned real estate for public purposes. After land was cleared it was sold to private real estate developers with no incentive to supply housing for the poor. Displaced citizens moved to high density housing projects, forcing thousands of small downtown businesses to close. Unfortunately, properties downtown remained vacant and underutilized for years because economic fabric fled to metropolitan areas and returning soldiers were given opportunities elsewhere contributing to the decline of the downtown.

Although not as impactful, other factors continued to influence the deterioration of the downtown after the recreational automobile era and government lead programs post WWII. The emergence of the shopping mall and technology abetted by the still increasing dependency of vehicles, continued to affect downtowns and flight to the suburbs.

The development of large shopping malls and department stores at the edges of towns with easier car access from suburbs shifted traffic towards malls and away from downtown centers. As people continued to move away from downtown, “everyday” businesses such as drycleaners, grocery stores, and restaurants, also left. The shift to suburban retail centers led to higher vacancy rates in the downtown. The decrease in business forced property owners to defer building maintenance, giving them a rough look. Downtowns, simply, could not compete, and fell deeper into the vicious cycle of disinvestment as they become more outdated.

As the shopping mall increased in popularity, more were being developed to meet the needs of the modern population. The creation of the indoor shopping mall included innovative technology such as air conditioning units that allowed for cooler temperature in large buildings. They included a centralized management and carefully planned retail mix specific to fulfill the

needs of society. They were home to large anchor stores, further alluding the population away from local independents that were most common in downtown. Shopping malls gave suburban communities greater commodities than downtowns at comforting distances for the automobile. As a result, the underutilized downtown increased the use of graffiti to decorate unloved and un-cared for properties, and developed a stereotypical image as deteriorating, deprived and dangerous spaces (Sperings, 2014). Derelict and abandoned buildings attracted marginal uses at a time when the media began to concentrate on the issue of rising crime and drug usage (Ford, 2003). This cultural assumption caused affluent citizens to move out of the urban core or downtown, and settle in suburbs (Rhoda, 2011).

FIG 2.3 : Plan for Fort Worth, Texas (1956). Architect Victor Gruen's plan for downtown Fort Worth—a pedestrian core surrounded by garages for cars that arrived on an encircling freeway—recapitulated his earlier plans for suburban shopping centers and established a highly influential paradigm for rebuilding city centers in an auto-oriented age.

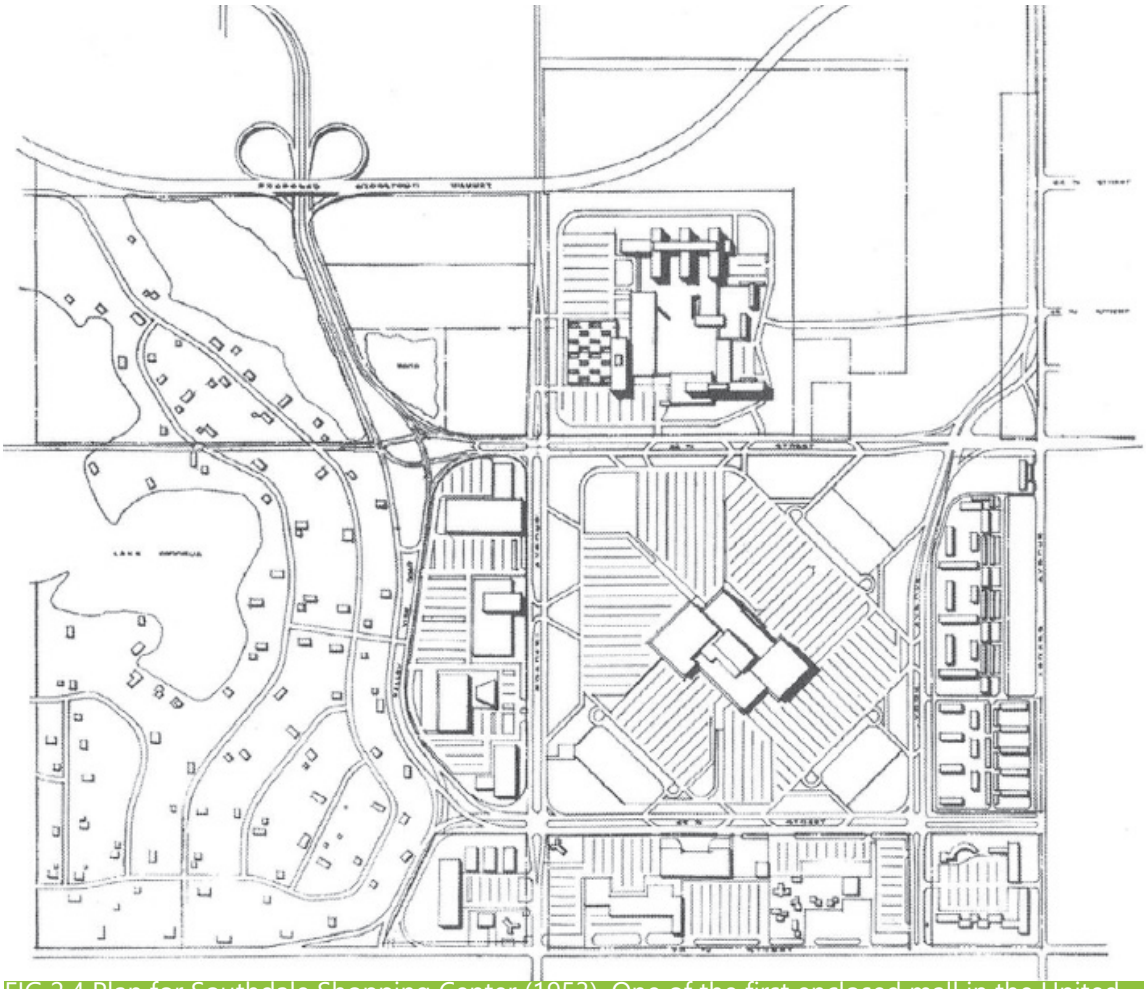

FIG 2.4 Plan for Southdale Shopping Center (1953). One of the first enclosed mall in the United States, Southdale opened in 1956. It served as a prototype for many downtown-revival plans into the 1980s.

2.4 Importance of Downtowns

It is undeniable that downtowns have suffered relative decline as a plethora of competing centers have blossomed in suburbs and elsewhere (Ford, 2003). Nevertheless, downtowns are iconic and powerful symbols of a city for numerous reasons.

Some of the most perceived reasons for the importance of downtown include that they represent the heart of the city offering rare insights into the city's past, present and future. They are the traditional center of the society, and a diverse environment. They offer more variety than even the largest megamalls and theme parks, and the associated social and economic costs are far lower (Ford, 2003). They make your town or city stand out within your region as a destination to shop, dine, visit, move to, or invest. They celebrate the community's diverse history, create new opportunities for long-time neighborhood residents, and to achieve the triple-bottom line

of a more equitable community, stronger economy, and protected environment (Smart Growth America, 2015). They often contain the most iconic landmarks and distinctive features of a town. Yet, these are not all the reasons why a healthy downtown is important.

A town's downtown area has an important and unique role in economic and social development. They create a critical mass of activities where commercial, cultural, and civic activities are concentrated (Gleaser, 2013). This concentration facilitates businesses, learning, and cultural exchange. According to Andy Kitsinger, a principal consultant at The Development Studio, a healthy downtown is key to a strong community because they are often the hotbeds of business creativity, neighborhood activism, non-profit entrepreneurs, economic diversity, and an attraction for visitors, seniors, and young talent. Additionally, downtowns are multifunctional. They provide a greater range of functions than any other location in the region which attracts many stakeholders. And as more people become stakeholders, downtowns increase in importance; likewise the sphere of activity.

A downtown has the potential to improve the way people move, work, play, and stay healthy (Jackson & Sinclair, 2011). The visible activity in streets and alleys offers visitors an escape of the suburban landscape. The activity of shops on sidewalks create a sense of intimacy, attracting more pedestrian activity (Jackson & Sinclair, 2011). Downtowns offer a street life with street events such as markets and small concerts which reduce the manifestation of dead space and increases human scale. Human scale and human activity encourages visitors to be active (Robertson, 1999), which leads to streets that are safe and comfortable for walkers and bikers.

Downtowns are pedestrian friendly, and often they are the only location on town where one could appreciate several amenities on foot giving downtowns a high sense of place. They offer many destinations at walkable distances, and regardless of the aesthetic qualities, the presence of people and human activity in a downtown allows people to feel alive. Large numbers of people can translate in to the perception of liveliness (Robertson, 1999) which is very important for humans especially now a days. According to Weber, humans are social beings, and all the time we spend at our computers makes us, if anything, even hungrier for real-world interactions (Weber, 2009). This makes a place like downtown even more important. Additionally, the concentration of activities and increased transportation diversity in downtown is also environmentally friendly because it helps reduce sprawl. A downtown often reduces the community's automobile use, increases walking, increases fitness, and reduces traffic congestion.

Downtowns are also very important because of their location. According to Jonathan Webber, an economists and writer, downtowns have the "power of place" which is very important for a broad range of businesses. Recent trends of demographic and market indicators indicate that growth and development are moving back from the suburban and exurban fringe towards downtowns and areas near to them (Weber, 2011). Because of their outstanding location, generating significant walk-in traffic only requires an attractive storefront with a prominent sign

as a marketing. Whereas, the more you move to the outskirts of town, drawing walk in traffic becomes more difficult.

Businesses located downtown are often associated with the "buy local" movement which also benefits local economies. Some of the economic benefits of a prosperous downtown include: property value and tax revenue increases, attracting and retention of local workers and employers, upfront construction costs, direct use costs, and the encouragement of pedestrian use in the retail core (Ford, 2003). According to the American Independent Business Alliance, dollars spent in community based merchants create a multiplier in the local economy. It triggers a mechanism that recirculates more money in the local economy especially if it is supplying jobs for residents. The multiplier effect is comprised of three elements- the direct impact, the indirect impact, and the induced impact (AMIBA, 2015) (See Fig 2.5). This means that more goes into input costs – supplies and upkeep, printing, advertising, paying employees – which puts that money right back to the economic base of the community. The Cornell University (2012) states that, the impact from $1 spent can ripple and multiply 2.5 to 8 times around increasing economic activity closer to home.

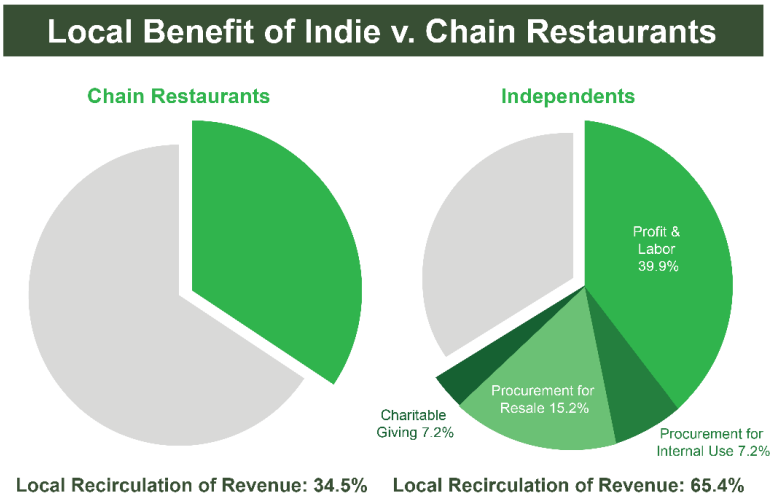

FIGURE 2.5: Local vs chain restaurant example

Additionally, buying local keeps local and small businesses active which in many cases have a local history. They encourage local prosperity by giving a community a distinctive character through one of a kind businesses. These businesses not only create local jobs and generate taxes, but they will encourage the community to shop locally by preserving local history, while avoiding economic leakage. Additionally, local businesses tend to have better service because they often hire people with a better understanding of the products they are selling and take more time to get to know customers in comparison to big box retailers. Local businesses also select products based not on a national sales plan but on their own interests and the needs of their local customers, this guarantees a much broader range of product choices. This is why many believe that downtowns are unique in that they are typically the only neighborhood that belongs to and is shared by everyone in the region.

Though downtowns are spaces that are constantly changing and being redeveloped, thanks to the interests and participation of local authorities, real estate actors, retailers and customers (Spierings, 2006), an obvious reason for the importance of downtowns to a community is due to the fact that the existing investments in infrastructure is already available in a downtown. Downtowns already have streets, sewers and water lines, gas and electricity, and a central location. Tyler and Ward (2011) state it is wasteful to discard existing infrastructure from both the economic and environmental standpoints. A downtown's diversity and functionality within the city's core reduces environmental impact because it avoids sprawl, congestion, habitat loss, and pollution.

2.5 Summary

Perhaps the most important trait linking to the formation of the American downtown derives from accessibility. Ease of access and the spectrum of activities within a downtown is an asset that all communities can take advantage of.

Since the formation of the downtown, their appearance and function is constantly changing and being redeveloped to meet the evolving needs of society. Initially, downtowns represented a place that residents could use to gather and enjoy while also being able to accomplish daily duties. For a long time, downtowns were healthy, vibrant places; downtowns were for people (Rhoda, 2011). Downtowns were the undisputed economic, cultural, and geographic city centers, and have always been subject to the push and pull of economic and social sources that produce rapid change in cities (Cook, 1980). Yet, cities that have preserved their downtown and local history are very rare. The few cities that have managed to preserve their downtowns resemble the "classic" American city, and are seen as "jewels of the region."

In order for them to remain successful, downtowns are being rebuilt and redeveloped to serve the same functions they were meant to since their formation, which was to have a common space that the city can utilize for and in many different ways. Today cities and towns continue to explore opportunities in their downtowns. And they should because downtown is where everything comes together. It is an attic where we store our past; it is a landscape which illustrates our cultural aspirations and technological possibilities; it is a street where we meet and learn to interact with a wide variety of people, and it is a challenge that hones our skills and keeps on our toes (Ford, 2003).

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3 CITY CONTEXT

In order to better understand the urban setting of the project, this chapter summarizes the context of the City of Coachella. This chapter presents a historical preface of the city, and descriptive and statistical information covering the most significant traits of the city. The chapter is divided into seven sections: (1) the City of Coachella, (2) the Early Days, (3) Immigration, (4) Agriculture, (5) Demographics and Population, (6) Employment, and (7) Economic Development.

3.1 The City of Coachella

The City of Coachella is located in the Riverside County, California, United States. It is located at the eastern end of the Coachella Valley and lies southeast of the San Grogonio Pass, east of the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains, and north of the Salton Sea. Bounded by mountains, the City of Coachella offers great mountain views in all directions. Coachella is located 28 miles east of Palm Springs, 72 miles east of Riverside, and 130 miles east of Los Angeles. The city is assessable by two major state highways, SR-111 which runs the length of the Coachella Valley, and SR-86 which connects the Imperial Valley to I-10. As such Coachella occupies a strategic location connecting the two major population centers in southeastern California.

FIGURE 3.1 : Regional Location Map Shows Coachella Within the Riverside County

Also known as the City of Eternal Sunshine for having 274 sunny days per year on average, the City of Coachella is located in the Salton Sea Air Basin. It is part of the Sonoran Desert that extends into California, also known as the Colorado Desert. The Colorado Desert named for its location surrounding the lower Colorado River is the largest, hottest, and driest subdivision challenging the Mohave Desert's Death Valley as the hottest and driest place in North America (Dimmitt, 2015). Climate usually consists of large daily and seasonal fluctuations in temperature and relatively high annual average temperature. Daily temperatures range from the mid-40s to low 70 degrees during winter, and from low 70s to mid-100s during the summer with an average rainfall of 3 inches. The area's average elevation is 68 ft. below sea level. The City of Coachella consists of an area of 28.95 square miles of land with approximately 43,000 residents (year 2013) (US Census, 2015). However the City's Planning Area is about 45,300 acres (about 71 square

miles) which is mostly undeveloped land. The city prides itself being a rural and agricultural based community with a rich history, and is one of California's fastest growing cities in the late 20th century.

3.2 The Early Days

The City of Coachella was founded in 1876, and was incorporated in 1946 with about 1,000 residents. The city was originally founded as Woodspur in 1876 when the Southern Pacific Railroad built a rail siding on the site. At the time Coachella was an undeveloped valley covered by sand waste from the Colorado River basin, and had a large population of mesquites and greasewood (City of Coachella, 2011).

Before settlement of the Coachella Valley by Europeans, the valley was home to the Agua Caliente band of Cahuilla Indians. The band was divided into three groups which had many villages within the Coachella Valley. According to the first official United States Land Survey on Southern California in the mid 1850's noted eight Indian Villages or Rancherias just outside the present boundaries of Coachella..

Jason L. Rector, an Iowa native, was the first to make a permanent home in Coachella. He received his education in a private school of Iowa, and then obtained a position in the government postal service where he engaged in farming and the real estate business (City of Coachella, n.d.). In 1884 Rector worked for Southern Pacific Railroad and established a mesquite wood terminal on a Southern Pacific Railroad siding. Rector named the mesquite wood terminal "Woodspur" which became the name of the town site for a few years. The terminal was a thriving business and hauled lumber to market in Los Angeles.

According to the City of Coachella, while living in Woodspur, Mr Rector surveyed and researched the area, and developed a plan to put down a well to test his idea that there was an abundance of water available for irrigation. A few years later his brother Lon B. Rector helped him dig the first well on the raw desert. The first well tapped a fine pure artesian water well, which descended 550 feet and was completed in November of 1900. After the first well was tapped the Rectors then set about laying a town site owned by Jason L. Rector with help of the investors C.E. Mawby and Requa Interests. A name had to be selected for the future town, and it was suggested to be called "Rector" but Jason L. Rector proposed to call it "Conchilla," which means little shells, or the "Land of Little Shells" due to the abundance of little shells in that area.

"Conchilla" was the name agreed upon, and developers formally laid out the town site in January 1901. They sent an announcement to the printers to inform the opening of a new town, it also stated that the area had potential in becoming a prime area for agriculture. However, when the announcement returned the name Conchilla was misspelled, it was interpreted as "Coachella." Mr. Rector decided to keep "Coachella" as the name to avoid delaying the announcement. As

more people found out that Mr. Rector had struck water in such an arid region many people went to inspect Coachella. Soon after people where proven the availability of irrigation in the area, the first citizens were located on homesteads to which the prior rights had been forfeited by previous settlers who had abandoned the area and their claims after not being able to get water.

FIGURE 3.2 : Artesian Water spurred land development in the City of Coachella. A cup of cool water is taken from this flowing artesian well in Coachella in 1906.

Mr. Rector built the first house in Coachella in 1902, it house was the only dwelling within a radius of many miles. He used the house to locate settlers and pioneers at a cost of $10 per filing for a few years. Later in 1904 Mr. Rector founded and became president of the Coachella Valley Produce Association, shipping fruit out of the valley via train. In 1904 Mr. Rector built the first pre-cooling plant which at the time was the finest and largest in existence. Most of the land in the whole Valley passed through his hands. He also made the only map of the Valley by hand and always maintained an active interest for the valley, acting as an unofficial mayor until his death in 1919.

Coachella remained a town until its incorporation in December 13, 1946. The city began with 2.5 square miles of land which was donated to the Riverside County by the Coachella Land and Water Company in 1905 but then donated back to the Coachella City Council after its incorporation. This area is now part of the down-town area and the city hall.

3.3 Immigration

The first wave of non-native American immigrants began with the discovery of gold in California in 1848. A stagecoach was put into place in a rediscovered ancient trail that gold miners and settlers used to search for gold and water. After the incorporation of Coachella and the settlement of the first agriculture workers and land owners, immigration was relatively low until

1942-1964 with the Mexican Farm Labor Program. During the mid-twentieth century farmers faced increased pressures from foreign producers which convinced congress to recruit and make available a pool of seasonal workers to access flexible and cheap labor supply (Grove, 1996). Known as the Bracero Program, the United States imported thousands of young Mexican men to work on farms in the Coachella Valley. More attention was paid to Coachella as nuisance factors such as smog, subdivision, and trespassing lead to the relocation of agriculture businesses from large cities like Los Angeles to the Coachella Valley (Dy Bry, 2007). This contributed greatly to the immigration cycles that fled the Coachella Valley, and shaped the city's environment.

3.4 Agriculture

Although most refer to the Coachella Valley as a getaway spot for retirees and the rich or its famous concerts, agriculture is a major player in the local economy. The completion of major irrigation projects that brought water from the Colorado River and highways in the 1940s had a dramatic impact on the growth of the Coachella Valley. Since the 1940s, the Coachella Valley continues to grow and bring more people to support the agriculture production, and has become the valley's primary economic sector next to tourism (CGPU, 2014). The Coachella Valley accounts for an estimated 85,000 acres of suitable agriculture land (Marra, 2008). In addition, a report by the Riverside County Agriculture Commissioner states the total crop production for the Coachella Valley in 2007 was $486 million.

LAND USE CLASSIFICATION	ACRES	% OF TOTAL AREA	% OF TOTAL AREA EXCLUDING AGRICULTURE AND VACANT LAND
AGRICULTURE	11,174	33%	-
COMMERCIAL AND SERVICES	138	0.4%	3%
EDUCATION	98	0.3%	2%
FACILITIES	54	0.2%	1%
GENERAL OFFICE	101	0.3%	2%
INDUSTRIAL	892	3%	18%
MIXED COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL	5	0.01%	0%
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	55	0.2%	1%
OPEN SPACE AND PARKS	109	0.3%	2%
OTHER RESIDENTIAL	277	1%	6%
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	1,007	3%	20%
TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATIONS, + UTILITIES	1,889	6%	38%
UNDER CONSTRUCTION	300	1%	6%
VACANT	18,224	53%	-
GRAND TOTAL	**34,322**	**100%**	**100%**

TABLE 3.5 : Area per land use in the city.

In comparison to neighboring cities, the agriculture sector is the most prosperous in the City of Coachella. In the City of Coachella, agriculture land accounts for an estimated 11,174 acres of land, 33% of the total area (Refer to Figure 3.5), and is a primary component of the City, providing jobs and major economic activity (City of Coachella, 2013). Coachella is known for niche crops such as dates, grapes, lemons, oranges, avocados, figs, persimmons, and even mangos (CGPU, 2014). According to the United States Department of Agriculture, Coachella's ability to grow multiple field crops results in year round harvesting and are of high value from both their sales and revenues.

FIGURE 3.6 : This site in Coachella is home to the first commercial planting of dates in the United States.

An agricultural staple in the region and the City of Coachella is the date palm. Date palm trees in the Coachella Valley can be traced back to when Spanish missionaries planted date seeds in the latter half of the 18th century (Muhmud, 1958). Since 1904, date cultivation spurred with the establishment of a U.S. Department date experimental station which proved Coachella's climate was excellent for growing dates (Lee, 1963). According to the California Department of Food and Agriculture, in 2008 the overall valuation of date crop production in the Coachella Valley was $30.5 million. Additionally, the Coachella Valley accounts for approximately 90% of the total date production in the United States due to the similarity in climate to Algeria, Iraq, and Egypt, where dates are originally from (Morehouse, 2013).

3.5 Population and Demographics

According to a 2014 report by the California Department of Finance, the estimated the city's population to be 43,633 in 2014, and is steadily increasing. From the year 2000 to 2014 the City's growth rate increased 92%, and according to the Census Bureau, from 2005 to 2010, the city's population increased from 30,879 to 40,704 which was one of the most significant growth increases in the city's history. Coachella's 2014 General Plan Update anticipates that growth will continue estimating a population of 70,200 by 2020 and 128,700 by 2035. The City has experienced a number of population booms and currently has a housing count of approximately 9,900 units, and a job count of approximately 5,830. The City is anticipating major growth in the coming decades and expects a population of nearly 135,000 people by 2035. Table 3.6 summarizes the incremental 2035 growth under the CGPU required to sustain the City's growth.

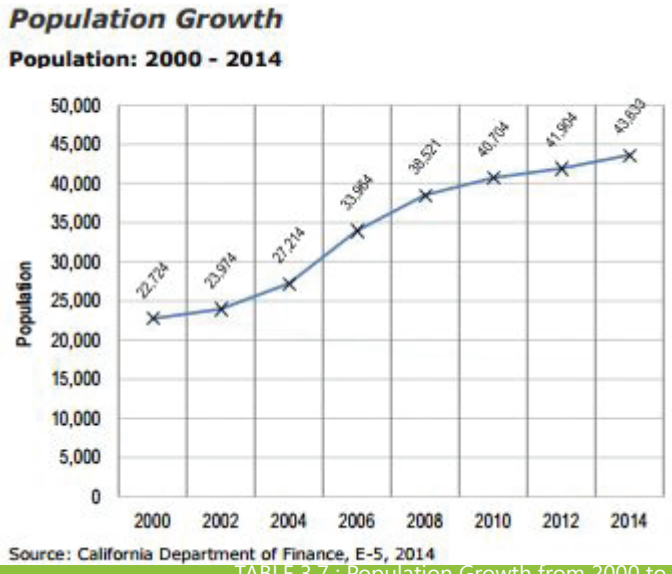

TABLE 3.7 : Population Growth from 2000 to 2014

Though the City of Coachella has steadily increased in population, it is not uniformally distributed within the city's area. In 2010 the population density in the City of Coachella is 2.20 persons per acre for the entire city, which is about four times higher than the county and six times higher than the state (CGPU, 2014). However, Coachella's population density is not distributed unevenly. Coachella's developed areas have a density of 6.71 persons per acre, due to the largely unpopulated area in the eastern side of the City that include small pocket of low density developments such as mobile parks and rural development (Refer to Fig 3.7) (CGPU, 2014). Despite its uneven developed areas, Coachella has lower density (2.20 Persons per Acre) than neighboring cities such as Palm Desert (2.82 Persons Per Acre) and Indio (4.17 Persons Per Acre.

Unlike neighboring cities in the Coachella Valley, the City of Coachella has not become more ethnically diverse over the past 20 years. In 2010, Hispanic or Latinos of any race made up for about 97% of the population which is over double the percentage for the county as a whole,

followed by White (2.29%), Asian (0.41%), and African American (0.34%) (City of Coachella, 2014).

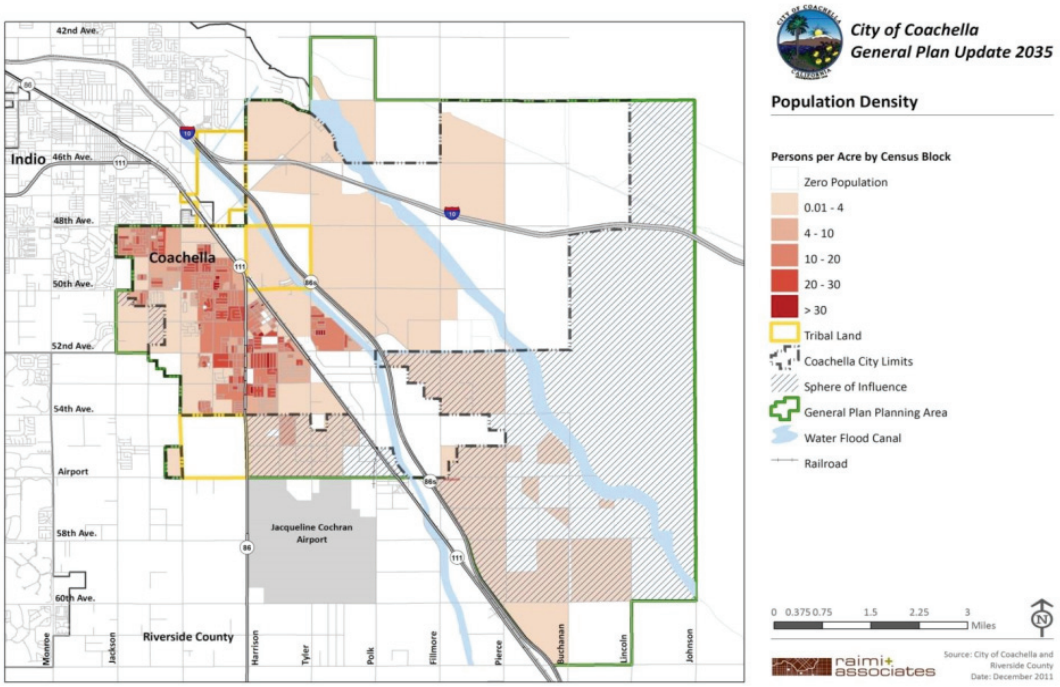

FIGURE 3.8 : Population Density - Persons per Acre

3.6 Income

According to the 2014 U.S. Census Bureau Community Survey, the median household income in the City of Coachella was $37,748. This is lower than the countywide average which was estimated at $52,648, even though it has increased $8,700 from 2000 to 2014 (See figure 3.9). Based on the American Community Estimates, poverty levels were also significant from 2008 to 2010. Approximately 24% of the homes in the City had income below the Federal poverty line. Additionally, in 2010 poverty rates were recorded at 13% higher than the countywide; 14% higher than the statewide averages.

3.7 Employment

In 2013, the California Employment Development Department estimates there are approximately 9,071 jobs in Coachella. From 2007 to 2013, total jobs in the City increased 40.4 percent. The three largest sectors were Agriculture (25%), retail (15%), and professional (10%) (Refer to Figure 3.10), and the manufacturing sector witnessed the highest growth from 4.6% in 2007 to 9.1% in 2013 (SCAG, 2014). Despite the increase in jobs the city continues to recover following the recession in 2012 were unemployment rates significantly increased. According to the California Employment Development Department, during the 2012 recessions the City of Coachella had the

highest unemployment rate of all the cities in the Coachella Valley at 20.0%; nearly twice as the State's rate of 11.0%.

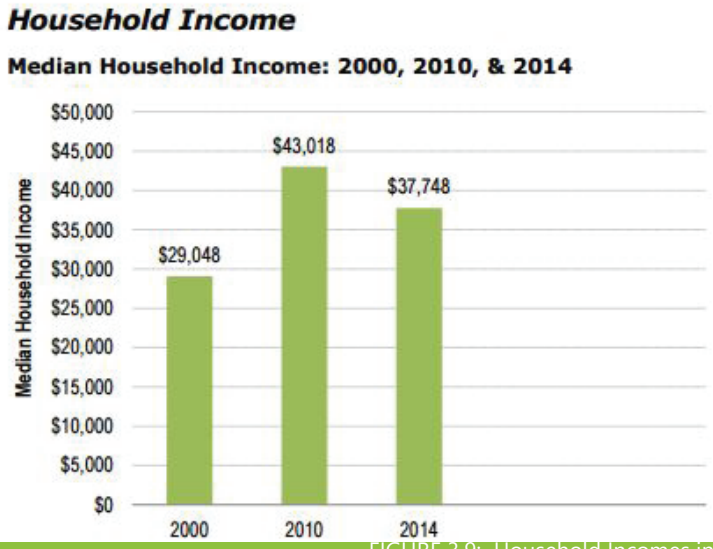

FIGURE 3.9: Household Incomes in the City of Coachella

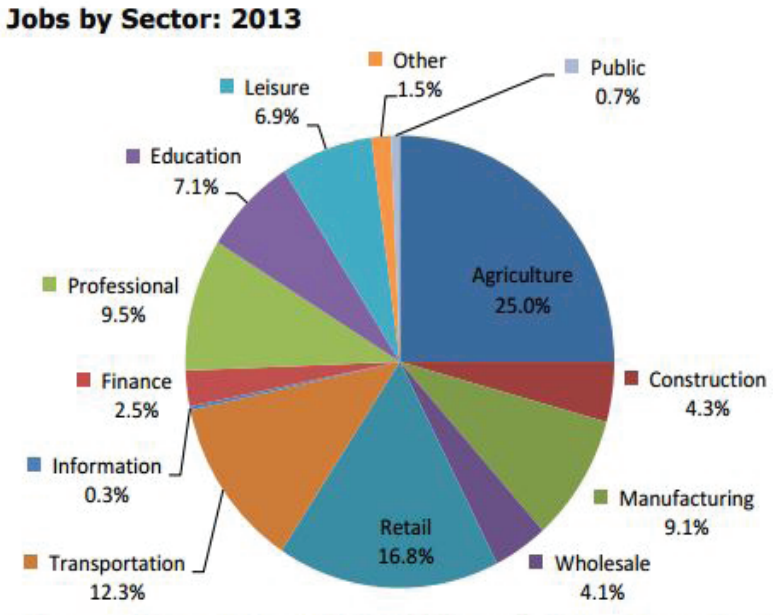

FIGURE 3.10: Jobs by sector in the City of Coachella

3.8 Economic Development

Coachella as part of the Coachella Valley and its glamorous reputation has shown evidence of the slow process towards economic recovery. There has been gradual increases in employment over the past years, however, there are several factors that result problematic to the City's economic development.

A concerning issue for Coachella's economic development is that it is a job-poor city. The job-housing ratio is a basic tool used to measure whether the number of jobs and housing units within a community are roughly equivalent (CGPU, 2014). In Coachella the job-housing ratio was 0.65 (5,831 jobs / 8,998 housing units) in 2010 which is significantly lower than the recommended ratio of 1.5 workers per households (CGPU, 2014). Additionally, the 2014 Census Bureau states that only 14.7% of the working population (age 16 and over) live and work in the city, indicating 85.3% commute to other places. As a result of the lack of jobs, US Census data states that work destination and commute times for Coachella residents are the highest of all the cities in the Coachella Valley. From this information one can assume that there are not enough desirable jobs in the City, making commuting an alternative and a loss of tax money.

Another factor that challenges economic success in the Coachella valley are poor salaries. Though, the average household income has increased over the past decade it is still relatively low in comparison to the state and county. According to the American Community Estimates (2008-2010), approximately 24% of the households in the City had income below the federal poverty level. This was 13% higher than the countywide average, and 14% higher than the statewide average. The Coachella 2014 General Plan Update also states that 28% of the households earned less than $25,000 per year and 51% of households earned less than $50,000 per year from 2008 to 2010. More recently the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) prepared a profile report for the City of Coachella that states the 2014 Average Household Income is $37,748 which is $14,900 below the County's average ($52,648).

Conversely, to aid the City's economic and social wealth, the General Plan Update includes the "disadvantaged communities" section which is used to identify vulnerable communities. Senate Bill (SB) 244 defines disadvantaged communities and requires cities and counties to asses for such communities to reduce inequalities and encourage investment and planning to address regional inequality and infrastructure deficits (CGPU, 2014). The SB 244 criteria is set to identify the location of disadvantaged communities, to meet the requirements a community: 1) Housing contains 10 or more dwelling units in close proximity to another, 2) Community is either within the City's sphere of influence, is an island within the city boundary, or is geographically isolated, and has existed for more than 50 years, and 3) the median household income is 80% or less than the statewide median household income. According to the General Plan Update and the Riverside Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), there are five disadvantaged communities within the City's sphere, the highest of all the cities in the Coachella Valley, and second highest in the County. Although the city has been slowly recovering, it has a significant amount of development assets which has kept Coachella growing at a steady paste. For example, since 1995 about three of every four residents are moving to eastern Coachella valley cities such as Indio and Coachella (Pierceall, 2005).

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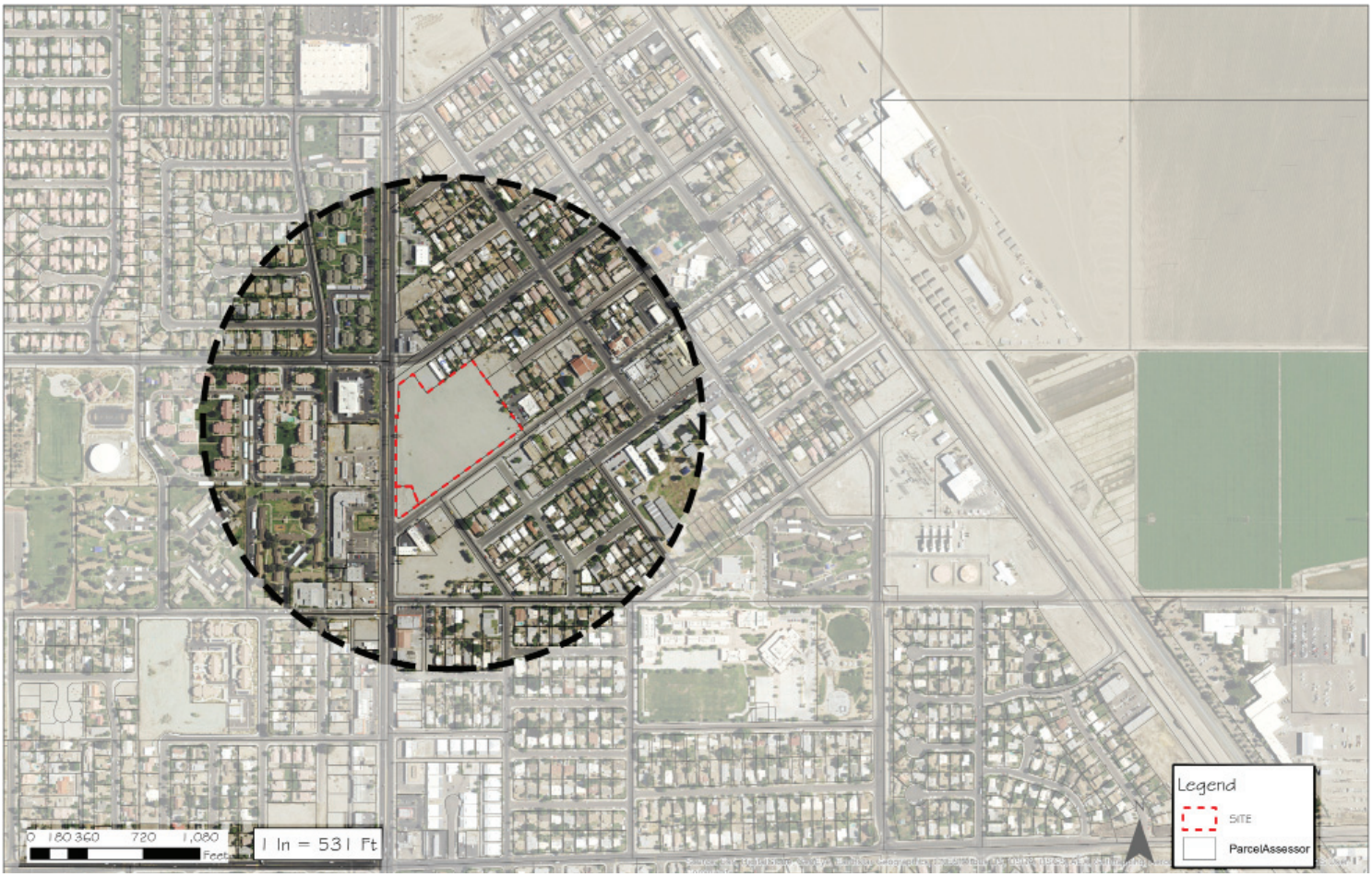
4 SITE ASSESMENT



4 SITE ASSESMENT

This chapter discusses the physical and social attributes of the project site and surrounding area. This section includes information that will help unfold and further understand the site's condition. Through this evaluation, design decisions will be molded considering the site's limitations and opportunities. The chapter is divided into nine sections: (1) Importance of Project Site, (2) Description of the Project Site, (3) Vista del Sol Project Site Context, (4) History of the Site, (5) Vehicular Circulation, (6) Public Transit, (7) Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation, and the three last sections include images related to the site.

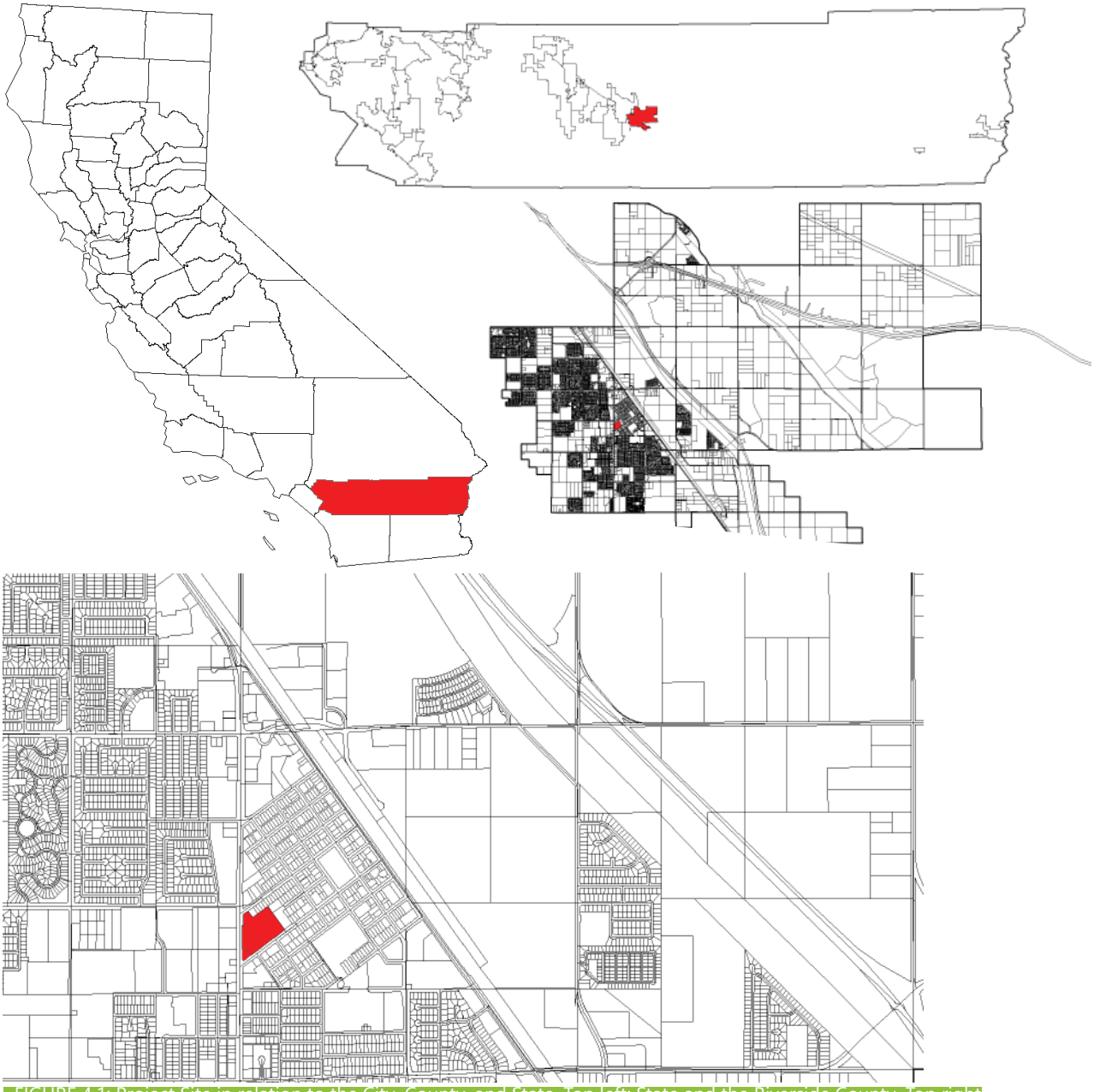


FIGURE 4.1: Project Site in relation to the City, County, and State. Top left: State and the Riverside County. Top right County highlighting City of Coachella. Mid-right: City in relation to the project site. Bottom image dispalys the site and surrounding area.

Except for a small lot at the corner at Harrison and 6th street, which was a gasoline station until the 1990s, most of the project site has been vacant land throughout its existence. The site is considered empirically important to the City of Coachella due to its central location. It is part of the City's historic downtown that was established around a Southern Pacific Railroad station in the late 1900s (City of Coachella, 2010). According to Luis Lopez, the Community Director for the City of Coachella, there has been potential for development in the past decade, however, due to the trends of development over the past years, and the onset of the 2008 economic downturn along with the site's history, development has not been successful.

The 2014 City of Coachella General Plan Update outlines the site will provide a wide range of amenities and bring life back to the downtown. The site will be the heart of the City, and give the city a sense of place and a location for community and civic gathering (General Plan, 2014). The adjacent downtown area will focus on civic, arts and residential, include the new city hall, an expanded library, a senior center, medium to high- density housing, art galleries, and retail uses (General Plan, 2014). To accomplish such goals the city developed the Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan vision. The City states that implementing the guidelines and goals set in this plan are vital to the project site due to its location. This site will create a lively 24-hour presence and establish a designation for residents of the Coachella Valley, not just the City of Coachella.

4.2 Description of Pilot Study Area and Project Site

The pilot study area goes beyond the project site boundary. It encompasses a larger area that will also be analyzed to gain understanding of the site's surrounding environment, and better understand the site.

The pilot study area is located in the City of Coachella, within the Coachella Valley in Riverside County, California. It lies approximately 18 miles southeast of Palm Springs, 65 miles east of Riverside, and 120 miles east of Los Angeles. The project site provides exceptional regional connectivity and access because it is parallel, highly visible to the Harrison Corridor, and connects to Highway 111 via 6th street. It is a prominent location located in the center of the City along its two principal corridors (Harrison St. and Highway 111).

The project site will cover the remaining vacant land at the easternmost tip of the City of Coachella's Downtown Corridor. The site is currently an undeveloped large triangular shaped piece of land – bounded by 6th street on the South, the Harrison street corridor on the West, and 4th street on the North (show in pilot study area map, look jabs). However, according to the Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan, 5th street will connect to the Harrison Corridor. Therefore, the project site will act in accordance with the Pueblo Viejo's proposed street and parcel layout and divide the large parcel (get site plan in the pueblo Viejo). Currently, a mixture of retail, dining, locally owned shops, the adjacent Veteran's Park, and City Hall draw the majority of the people to the study area. However, lack of sidewalk continuity, abandoned businesses, and lack of

maintenance to buildings and streetscape features, and vacant lots characterize the area as well.

In addition, Sixth Street is empirically important because of its history and the amenities it offers to the community. Currently, it serves as the major commercial hub of retail, school, churches, and other neighboring services within walking distances for residents. Though many services remain downtown the facilities are now overburdened due to the capacity demands of the growing City, driving many services elsewhere. Currently, City Hall is the major destination that draws residents to the downtown area, amidst the numerous vacant parcels (such as the project site) and the dilapidated buildings many of them built in the 1920s.

FIGURE 4.2: Downtown Coachella currenlty suffers from abandoment and lack of maintenance.

The subject site for the Vista del Sol Mixed-Use development is located at 51298 Harrison Street and consists of four vacant parcels within one block. According to the Riverside County's Assessor's Map, the parcels in the proposed development are located on assessor parcel numbers (APN) referred to as 778-080-005, 778-071-005, 778-080-006, and 778-080-007 (See Figure 4.3). Out of the four parcels inhabited within the project site, the two larger ones (778-080-006 and 778-080-007) will be analyzed with additional detail due to their controversial history and importance to the City of Coachella.

The larger parcel, APN #778-080-006, is approximately 6.56 Acres with an estimated land value of $2,691,535 in the year 2015. The smaller parcel at the entrance of 6th street, APN #778-080-007, is approximately 0.32 Acres with an estimated land value of $142,800 in the year 2015 (The Riverside County Assessor's Office, 2016).

FIGURE 4.3: Assessor parcel numbers (APN) referred to as 778-080-005, 778-071-005, 778-080-006, and 778-080-007 on the project site.

The 51298 Harrison Street site (APN 778-080-007)was occupied by the DeLeon's Service Center until the early 1990s. According to archives from the City of Coachella's Planning Department, the site functioned as the Ray De Leon's Rocket Service Station from 1967, and was owned by Ray De Leon. The service station was very successful and went through many remodels and was one of the first service stationed in the City of Coachella (See figures 4.4). The last major renovation was in 1974 and served under the same name until the early 1990s when it was sold. The property was sold to Infante Enterprises and operated as the Infante Gas and Market for a few years until it was shut down and abandoned. A few years after it was abandoned the main building of the service station was demolished and the service pumps were removed. However, the station's canopy remained on-site until 2001 when Jose Borges, the last recorded owner, ordered it to be demolished (City of Coachella, 2001). Since then the parcel remains vacant and abandoned. The only type of activity on the site has been due to soil and groundwater plume testing and clean up.

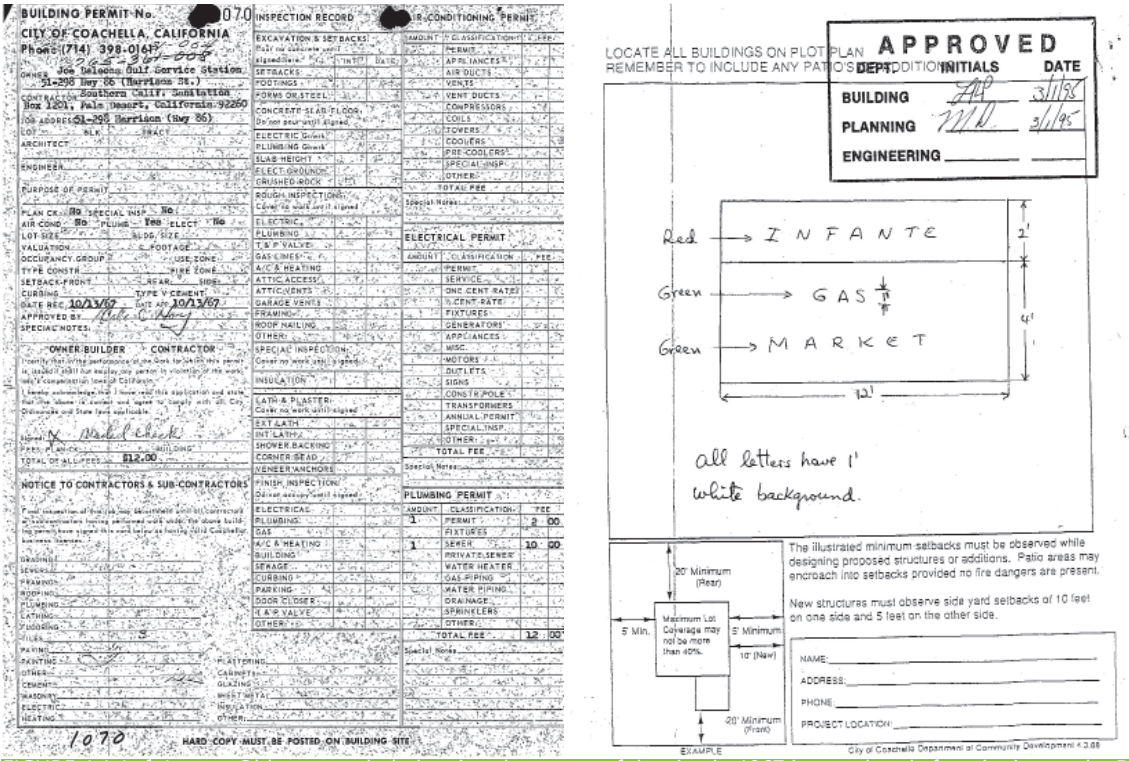


FIGURE 4.4: Left Image: Oldest recorded planning document of the site, in 1967 it was already functioning as the De Leon Rocket Service Station. Right Image: Last renovation made to structure on the site.

The parcel was considered a hazardous material site by the California Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1991. Soil contamination in the site due to the leakage of petroleum storage tanks concerned groundwater contamination to the Colorado River Basin which is used for beneficial uses such as agricultural supply, industrial service supply, and municipal and domestic supply (State Water Resources Control Board, 2015). The Reynold's Group (TRG) was hired in 2005 to monitor and assess the site's gasoline plumes in soil and groundwater with funding from the Emergency, Abandoned, and Recalcitrant Account which is administered by the State of California Cleanup Fund.

During the year 2005, TRG advanced four soil boring 30 feet below ground surface, both on and off-site, converted soil borings into groundwater monitoring wells to collect soil sample according to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) in an approved laboratory setting. On August 30th, 2006, TRG removed two 10,000 gallon underground storage tanks (UST), one 8,000 gallon UST, one 500 gallon waste oil UST, and associated piping from the site (State Water Resources Control Board, 2016). According to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), as of the First Quarter of 2009 there were nine groundwater monitoring wells and two dual-nested AS/SVE wells on and off-site (State Water Resources Control Board, 2016). Wells were installed or re-developed by TRG between March 2007 and October 2008, and groundwater monitoring has been performed at the site since April 2007. In March of 2009 TRG submitted a Remedial Action Plan and Technical Workplan to address the gasoline impacted soils and groundwater on and off-site by performing air sparging coupled with soil vapor extraction. A soil vapor extraction system was installed and began operation in November of 2009, and an offsite bio-sparge system was installed in March 2012 to address the offsite impacts to groundwater from the site.

Finally, in 2013 the California EPA and the Regional Water Quality Control Board accepted the closure summary report. The site was set for closure based upon meeting the criteria for the Low Threat UST Closure Policy. According to the State Water Control Boards, the removal of the underground storage tanks, removal secondary source, and confirmation soil and underground sampling indicated residual contamination was stable and/ or decreasing. The closure acceptance means there are no threats to human health, the environment or beneficial uses related to water quality that derive from the site. Thus, the site is no longer considered a Hazardous Material Site by EPA as of 2013 (State Water Resources Control Board, 2016).

In the past years this parcel has had significant activity changing owners and going on the market multiple times. During 2014 the site was put for sale by a local real estate company, Desert Pacific Properties Inc. The .32 Acre parcel was evaluated at $150,000 ($10.76 per sq. ft.) (Desert Pacific, 2014) and sold to Avant Real Estate from Pasadena, Ca. Months later Avant Real Estate, Inc. placed the parcel on the for the second time in a year's span, increasing in value multiple times. Currently, the site in the market selling for $250,000 ($17.95 per sq. ft.); $100,000 more than the price a year earlier (Avant Real Estate, Inc, 2015). Even though, the site has not yet been developed its importance to developers is unavoidable, considering the activity it has been though during the past years.

DATE	STATUS
2/11/2014	Completed - Case Closed
2/6/2014	Open - Eligible for Closure
4/24/2013	Open - Eligible for Closure
3/14/2011	Open - Remediation
3/26/2009	Open - Site Assessment
12/21/2007	Open - Site Assessment
8/13/2007	Open - Site Assessment
12/8/2006	Open - Site Assessment
12/6/2006	Open - Site Assessment
10/8/1990	Open - Site Assessment
10/8/1990	Open - Case Begin Date

TABLE 4.5: APN 778-080-007 Cleanup Status History

The other parcel situated in the pilot study area, 50-980 Highway 86 (APN 778-080-006), has never been developed and remains vacant. The site was also considered a hazardous site by the California EPA during June 1990. According to the California State Water Resource Board (SWRB), during 1990 hydrocarbon odors were noted in a trench excavation along 4th Street south and adjacent to the site. Soil samples were obtained, confirming hydrocarbon compounds were present in the soils. Additionally, groundwater was encountered at approximately 12 feet below the ground surface which immediately triggered further investigation. After the findings, the County of Riverside Department of Health Services requested the SoCo Group conduct a site investigation to analyze impacts to the aquifer which is potentially used for drinking water

supply, and other ground water uses such as agricultural, municipal, and domestic supply (State Water Resources Control Board, 2015).

Because the site has never been developed the source of contamination derives from elsewhere. Additionally, reports and analysis from the CSWRB indicate that the source of contamination does not derive from the former the adjacent parcel (APN 778-080-007), the Deleon's or Infante's service stations. In this case, the SoCo Group is held responsible for the investigation because the source of contamination derives from the SoCo Apple Market #4 (50980 Highway 86 Coachella, Ca 92236) which is located directly across part of the study area that occupies parcel #778-080-007. In 2006, RM Environmental, Inc. was hired as the responsible party to fully assess and monitor the site's groundwater plume and soil contamination.

According to the SWRB, the SoCo Apple Market #4 is an active commercial petroleum fueling facility (See Figure 4.6) which during 1990 the facility has an unauthorized release of petroleum. Free product recovery was conducted between January 1994 and 1995, which removed 250 gallons of free product. Approximately 913 tons of impacted soils was excavated and removed in August of 1998 following the removal of 3 USTs. In 2011 solar vapor extraction was conducted which removed 180 pounds of total petroleum hydrocarbons. During this time RM Environmental identified that there are no public water supply wells or surface water bodies within 1,000 ft. of the projected plume boundary which is on the site. RM Environmental identified that the affected shallow ground water is not currently used as a source of drinking water, and it is highly unlikely that the affected shallow groundwater will be used as a source of drinking water in the foreseeable future, and other designated beneficial uses of the affected shallow groundwater are not threatened.

Since January 2011 active remediation has not been conducted. However, there are 18 groundwater monitoring wells that were installed in 1992, most of which have been deemed to closure and are within the study area (See figure 4.7) (State Water Resources Control Board, 2015). Therefore, the parcel in the study area is close to achieving the water quality objectives the site continues being a hazardous site. According to staff reports between RM Environmental and the County of Riverside Department of Environmental Health, the projected completion date to verify successful sampling and accept post remedial monitoring is during April of 2016.

FIGURE 4.6: Operating SOCO Gasoline Station adjacent to the project site

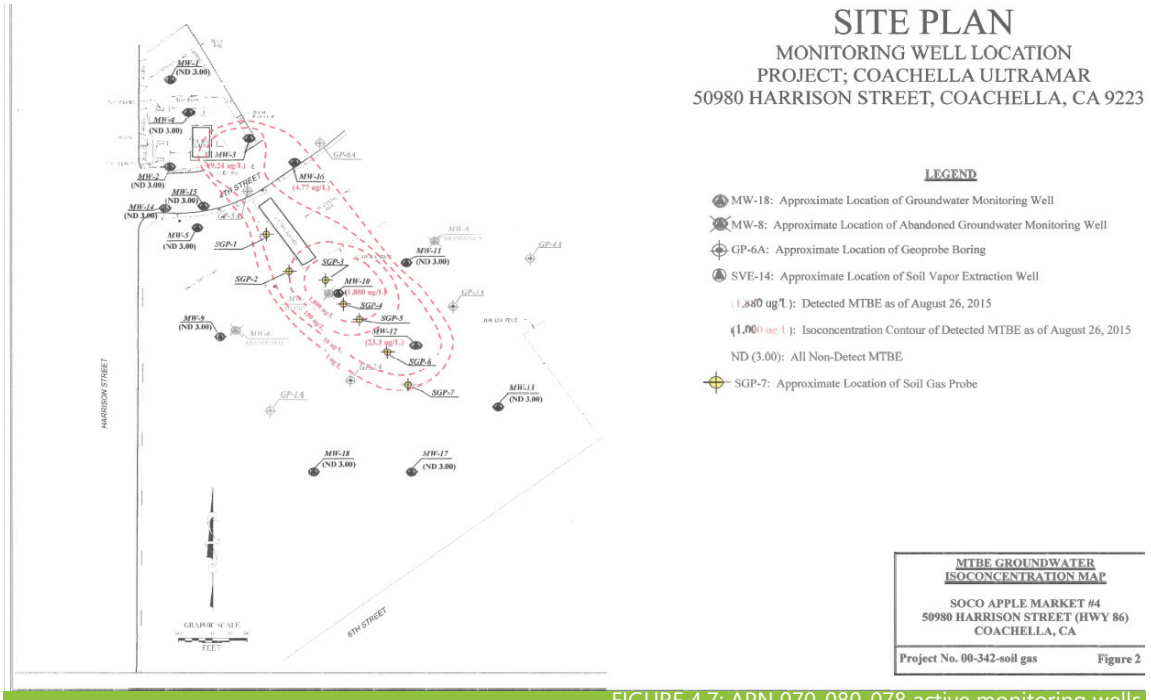


FIGURE 4.7: APN 070-080-078 active monitoring wells.

DATE	STATUS
1/1/1994	Open - Remediation
12/17/1991	Open - Site Assessment
6/20/1990	Open - Site Assessment
6/5/1990	Open - Case Begin Date

Table 4.8: APN 778-080-008 cleanup status history

Similar to the other parcel in the study area, this parcel was placed for sale in 2014. The 6.56 parcel was listed for $3, 429,043 by Coldwell Banker Commercial Associates (Coldwell Banker Commercial, 2015). In late 2014 the property was sold to Wilson Johnson Commercial Real Estate who then sold again to Baxley Properties, Inc. Baxley Properties re-listed the parcel for $3,500,000 early during 2015 who sold it to the latest owners, Capital Partners Development (Baxley Properties, 2016). After switching owners multiple times during the previous two years, the site was selected as a potential site for the development of a new Riverside County Department of Public Services needed in the Coachella Valley.

On January 6, 2015 the Riverside County Board of Supervisors approved the request by the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) for the Economic Development Agency (EDA) building to be located on the site (County of Riverside Economic Development Agency, 2016). According to the EDA DPSS building signed a 10 year lease agreement and is exempt to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 (b) (3) ("Common Sense Exeption). EDA states the DPSS is targeted to be completed for approximately July 2017, and will provide all temporary assistance programs such as: CalWORKs, Food Stamps, Medi-Cal, and Welfare-to-Work services.

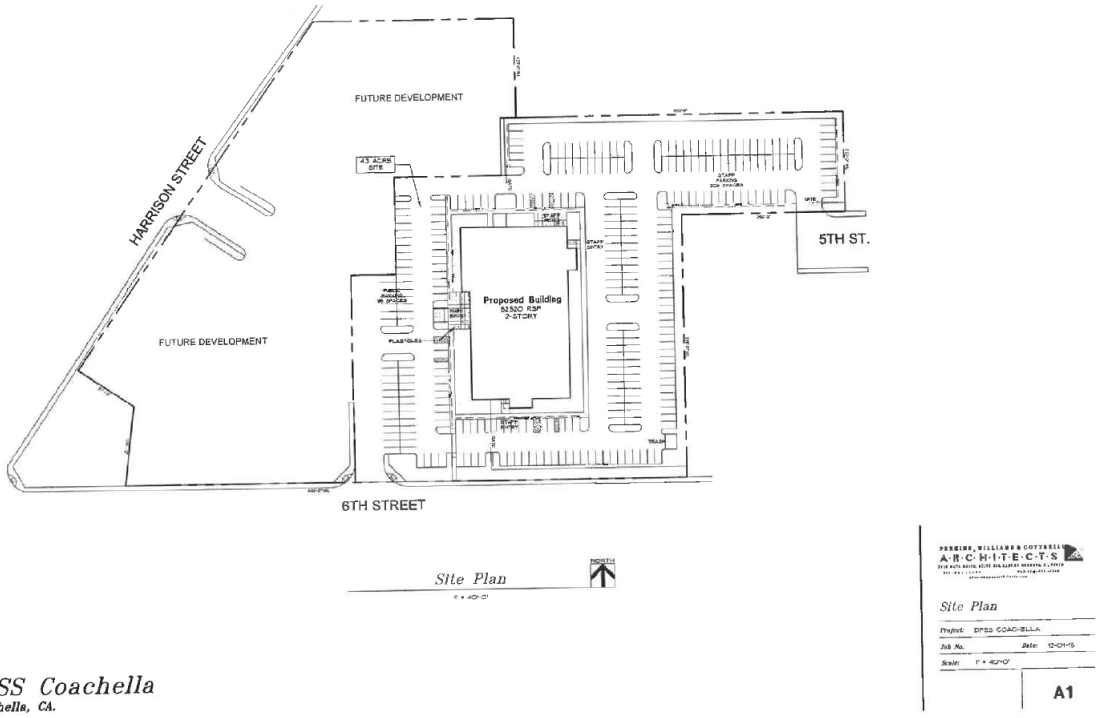


Figure 4.9: Preliminary design for the proposed DPSS development.

Considering the site's contamination, the site was tested before further consideration of development on the site was foreseeable. If developed, the project would change land use and increase occupancy, therefore it was necessary to conduct a vapor intrusion study (RCDEH, 2015). Capital Partners Development Co. LLC. who currently own the parcel, and RCDEH requested a soil vapor analysis to be conducted to evaluate the potential human health risk for the proposed development of the property (County of Riverside Department of Environmental Health, 2015). After being analyzed it was determined that indoor air of the proposed facility will not be threatened by fugitive vapor migration.

The proposed development of the County Department of Public Services building is 52,520 square foot in area, two-story, it includes approximately 312 parking stalls, and includes subgrade building elevations within 2 vertical feet of the existing ground surface (See Figure 4.8) (County of Riverside Department of Environmental Health, 2015).

4.4 Vehicular Circulation

The Harrison Corridor is the site's main thoroughfare running in a north-south direction. The Corridor was designed many decades ago to serve as a portion of State Highway 86, a major highway through the Coachella Valley. According to the Local Governments Commission, little attention was given to the needs of people who might not be in vehicles. Minimal thought was given to the impact of the wide roadway, and consequently high speeds and heavy traffic volumes on the community bisected the City of Coachella. The Local Governments Commission states Coachella's Harrison Corridor is characterized by (Local Governments Commission, 2011):

- A deficient pedestrian environment with many barriers to travel along sidewalks.
- Difficulty for pedestrians crossing major streets.
- An almost lack of bicycle facilities.
- Speed limits and speeds too high for an urban corridor in the heart of the community.
- Problem intersections with numerous vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian conflicts.
- Speeding and other driver misbehavior in school zones.

In its current implementation the Harrison Corridor segment runs adjacent to the study area and operates as a primary arterial with two lanes in each direction. The City's General Plan Update states this segment will serve as a Major Arterial by 2035. Currently, the segment consists of wide lanes and large curb radii at the 6th St. intersection, encouraging fast driving and turns. In addition, high vehicle speeds and long pedestrian crossings make pedestrian crossing difficult to the study area.

This Harrison Corridor is the busiest segment in the city. The City of Coachella General Plan Update sates this segment is projected to operate beyond its capacity within the build out of the General Plan by 2035. The plan projects the Harrison corridor will have a Level of Service (LOS) of F, exceeding the city's LOS threshold capacity of D (City of Coachella, 2014). In 2007, Urban

Crossroads conducted a traffic analysis for the City's 2014 Circulation Element, and identified the corridor's forecasted volume of average daily traffic to be approximately 23,700 vehicles per day with a LOS rating of C (City of Coachella, 2014). In addition, from 2008-2012 there were seven vehicular collisions and one bicycle collision that occurred on the Harrison Corridor adjacent to the study (CHP, 2012).

Intersection	Traffic Control[2]	Delay[1] (secs)		Level of Service	
		AM	PM	AM	PM
Harrison Street (NS) at:					
• Avenue 50 (EW)	Signalized	30.2	43.4	C	D
• Avenue 52 (EW)	Signalized	32.7	44.3	C	D
• Avenue 54 (EW)	Signalized	22.3	25.1	C	C
• Airport Blvd (EW)	Signalized	24.9	24.2	C	C

Table 4.10: Last recorded LOS for Harrison St. (Avenue 50 EW) recieved a C at AM and a D rating during PM hours.

Sixth Street borders the pilot study area to the South. Characterized as a local street, 6th Street is a single lane two-way street with parallel parking on both directions running at east-west direction. Sixth St. originates and ends to the two primary arterials in the City; Harrison Street to the West and State Route 111 (Grapefruit Blvd.) to the East. Sixth Street intersects the City's Historic Downtown, and is the main thoroughfare to navigate within it.

Currently traffic on Sixth Street is moderate with higher volumes of vehicular circulation during evenings and weekends. However vehicular use on this thoroughfare is anticipated to increase significantly. The General Plan Update, Sixth Street will be improved as the "main street" of the Downtown with a pedestrian-oriented environment and a diverse mix of retail and commercial activity. Sixth Street will also serve as the gateway to downtown at the intersection with Harrison Street.

4.5 Public Transit

Public transportation in Coachella is operated by SunLine Transit Agency, which enables commuters to travel within the City and adjacent cities with minimal transfers. Currently, SunLine operates two bus routes within the City, Route 90 and Route 91. Ridership data from Sunline indicates that each of these lines accommodates 700 trips per day during the week. Approximately 24% of ridership for Route 91 originates or terminates in Coachella (Fehr and Peers, 2014). Route 90 provides a similar number of trips as Route 91, but operates almost entirely within Coachella. According to the 2014 General Plan Update, transit ridership within the City is higher than in surrounding cities or towns. Additionally, Sunline Ridership data indicates that public transit may be a primary method in commuting to work for many residents because ridership during the week is significantly higher than in weekends.

Currently Route 90 and Route 91 serve the Project Site (See figure 4.10). Route 91 runs adjacent to the site via Harrison. It includes two transit stops within walking distance to the site, one

across Harrison and the other south of Sixth St. Route 90 bisects the Downtown and stops at the 5th St. and Orchard intersection, approximately two blocks away from the project site. Though current public transit access is exceptional, anticipated changes to the system will significantly improve accessibility to the site. According to the Coachella General Plan Traffic Impact Study Final Report and the General Plan's Circulation Section, the SunLine Transit Agency plans on improving its transit service to the City by adding a transit center on the project site. The site was identified as a prime location because it is close to downtown and will allow greater interactions with existing retail, office, and recreational uses.

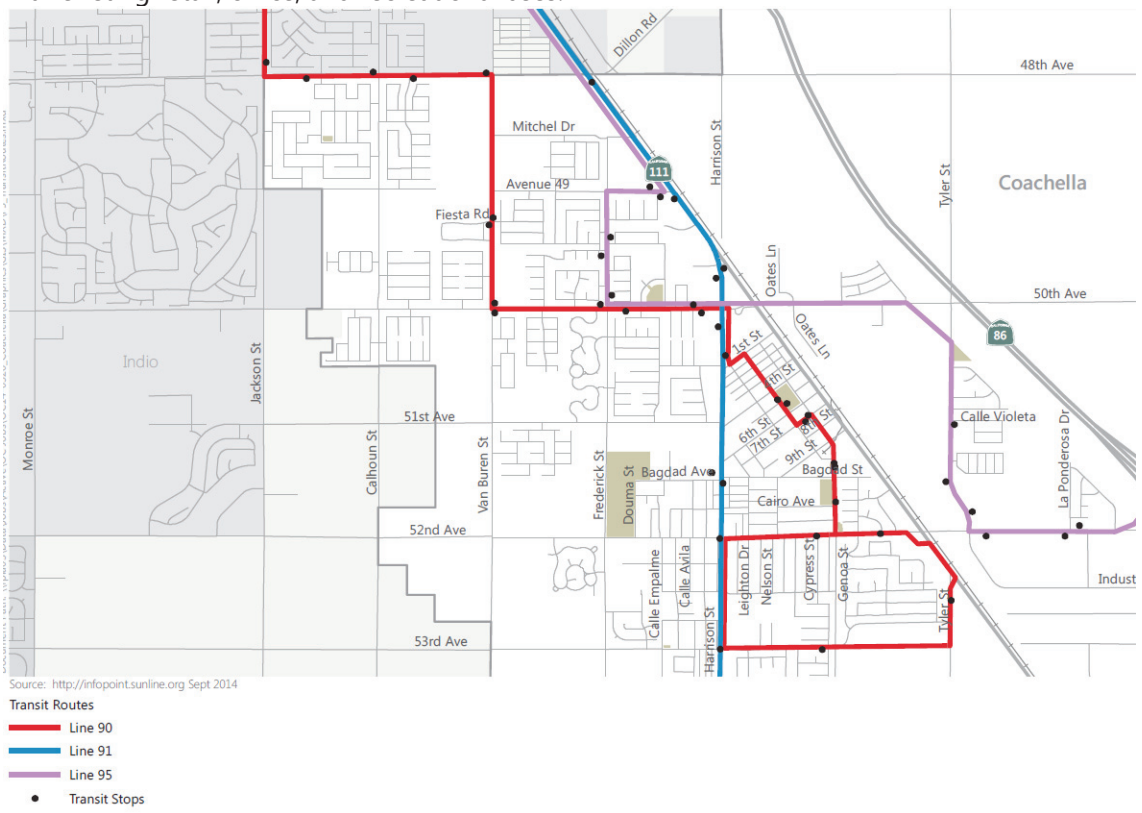


FIGURE 4.11 Public Transit Lines

4.7 Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities vary throughout the City. In general, the pedestrian network is well-connected within newly developed areas, but not as abundant in older areas such as the project site (City of Coachella, 2014). In older developed areas most sidewalks do not have curb ramps, and rarely include amenities to encourage pedestrian circulation. Similar to most of the sidewalks in the City, the bicycle network varies in abundance and quality. The network consists only of shared bicycle and motor facilities, most of which is unsigned road sections.

Currently, the project site promotes walkability and pedestrian activity. It lies within a traditional grid pattern street system, making site highly accessible and well connected to the area's street network. Harrison and Sixth Street are the main corridors connecting to the site. Along Harrison (to the West) and Sixth St. (to the South) the pedestrian infrastructure consists of grade separated sidewalks where available. The site can be accessed using two intersection crossings: Harrison

and Fourth St and Harrison and Sixth St. From the East it is accessible through Fourth St., Fifth St. which is currently a dead end leading to the site (See figure 4.11), and via Sixth St. Additionally, block sizes in the study area are not as large as in new developments in the city, making it easier for pedestrians to navigate the area. Despite the site's connectivity, and the benefits associated to walkable environments that benefit community and environmental health, there are numerous physical barriers that discourage pedestrian circulation in the study area.

FIGURE 4.11: A dead end on Fifth St. leads to the project site

Though sidewalks are generally in good physical conditions, without cracks or other physical impediments, they lack continuity and are not consistently present throughout the study area. For the most part sidewalks are available throughout the study area. A sidewalk exists along both sides of Sixth Street, but excludes areas that are undeveloped such as the project site (See Figure 4.12). Sidewalks also vary in width and design features. In some areas sidewalks are very wide and include an array of pedestrian amenities, while other completely lack a side walk. Such drastic differences are associated to the street's remodeling that occurred in 2010-2011. In 2010 a three block section of Sixth Street, from Grapefruit Boulevard to Palm Avenue was reconstructed. The three block section includes landscaping, street scape elements, pedestrian lighting and widening of the pedestrian walkway areas (Heptagon Seven, 2015). The results provided sidewalk widths of 17-30 ft. and introduced greenspaces as well (Heptagon Seven, 2015). While such improvements are prodigious, they were not distributed along the entire corridor, leaving area towards Harrison St. un-proportionally un-appealing. The majority of the study area includes sidewalks leading to the project site. For example sidewalks exist on both sides of Harrison Street and on 5th and 4th street as well. However, a physical barrier is added to the area's pedestrian circulation with the high speed of traffic (above 35 MPH) and worn and/or faded intersection crossings.

FIFURE 4.12: Sidewalks lack continuity leading to the site

4.8 Views In and Out of the Site

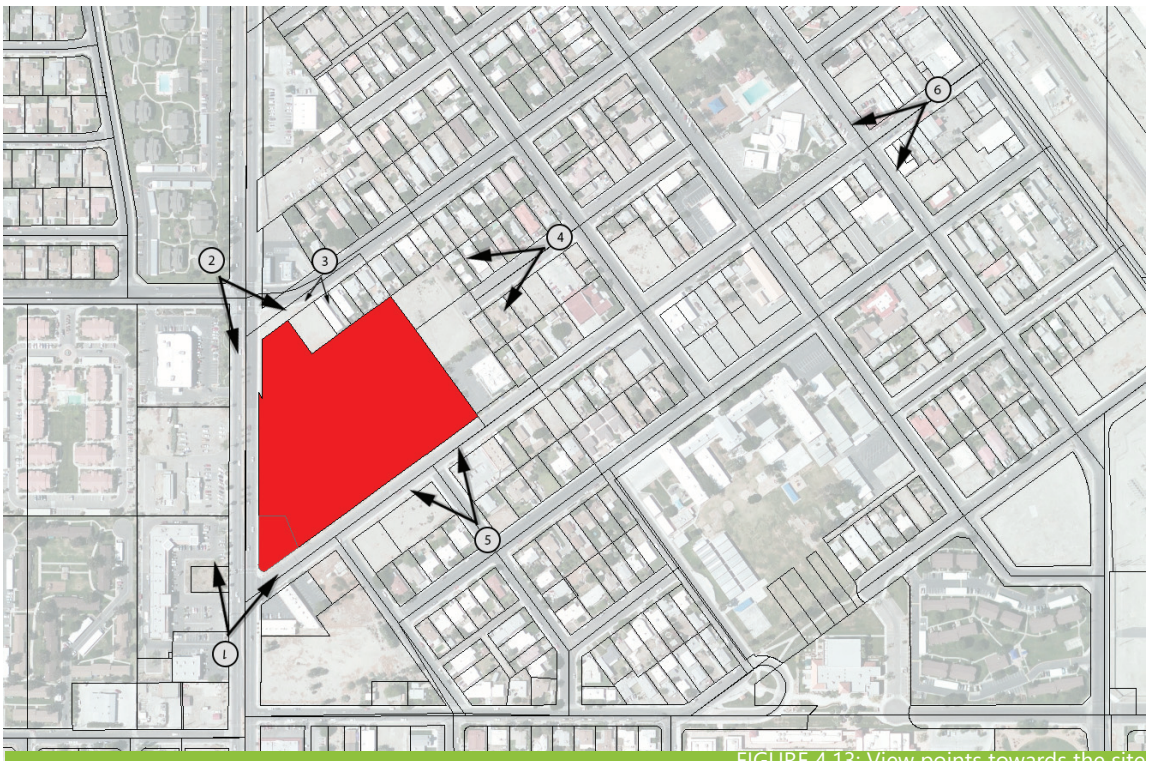


FIGURE 4.13: View points towards the site

VIEW IN: 1

VIEW IN: 2

VIEW IN: 3

VIEW IN: 4

VIEW IN: 5

VIEW IN: 6

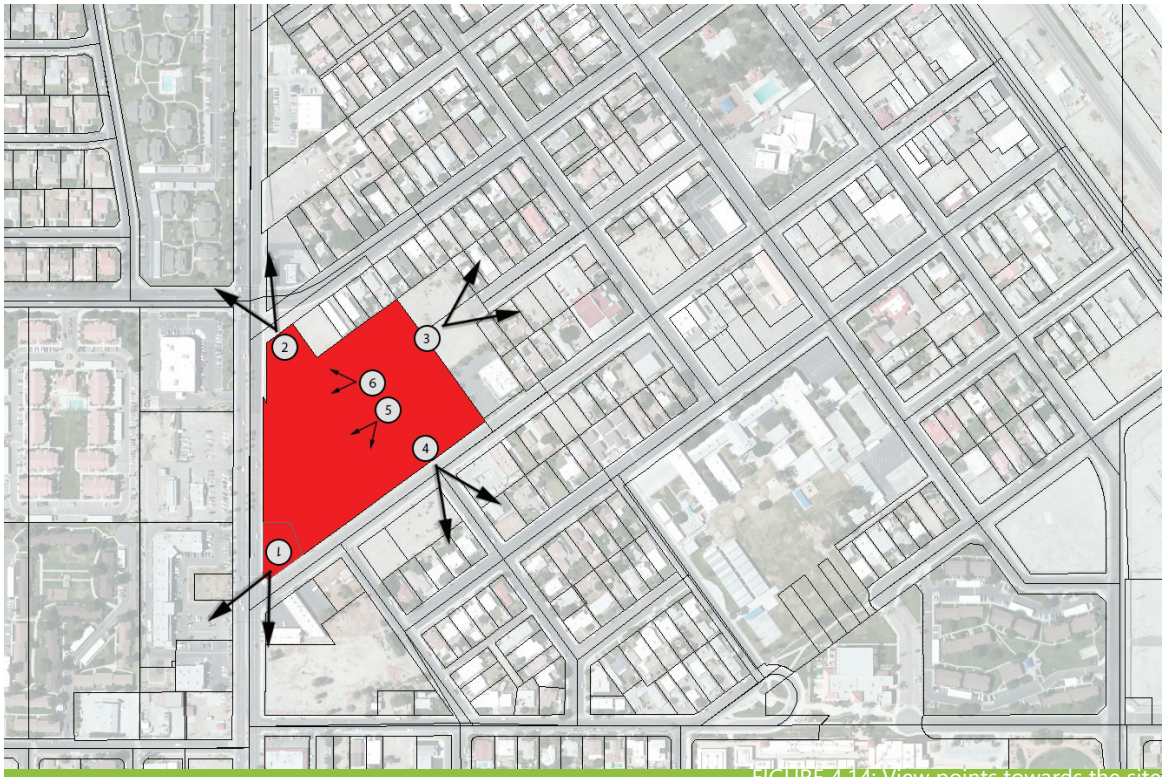


FIGURE 4.14: View points towards the site

VIEW OUT: 1

VIEW OUT: 2

VIEW OUT: 3

VIEW OUT: 4

VIEW OUT: 5 VIEW OUT: 6

4.9 Figure Ground Map

FIGURE 4.15: Figure-ground map of the area shows the relationship between the building mass, space, parcels and roadway system

4.10 Visual Inventory

The visual inventory displays significant images in and around the project site and pilot study area. The inventory provides a broader understanding of the study area and project site through images that display the physical appearance. It aids in understanding the area's current activities, uses, and role in the community. The inventory shows that most of the uses adjacent are retail, commercial, civic, and residential establishments. Establishments mostly consist of small scale restaurants, convenience stores, office, and single family residential.


Rite-Aid
City Hall
Sun Line Transit Stop
SevenEleven
City of Coachella Fire Department
US Postal Office

4.11 Regulatory Setting

This section describes the planning documents and programs that influence what can or should be developed on the project site. In addition, information relevant to the site is summarized to gain understanding what can be developed. Plans relevant to the physical development of the project site and the study area include: the City of Coachella Municipal Code (Zoning), Coachella General Plan Update, and the Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan.

4.12 Importance of Regulatory Setting

It is important to understand the project site's regulatory setting to avoid inconsistencies and better implement the General Plan. Although the Planning Area in the City of Coachella is regulated by the Land Use and Community Character Element in the 2014 Coachella General Plan Update (CGPU) and the City of Coachella Zoning Code, there are numerous documents/ plans that can govern and impact development in certain areas within the City (CGPU, 2014). For example, the Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan adopted by City Council in 2009 impacts the type of development on the site more extensively than the CGPU and the Zoning Code, and will be analyzed in section 4.14.

4.13 2014 General Plan Update (GPCU)

The state mandated Land Use and Community Character Element in the CGPU is the primary legal document to guide long-term growth, development, and conservation in the City. It provides a long-term vision, goals and policies for land use and development over the next 20 to 30 years (CGPU, 2014). The element is flexible and allows development to adjust to any changes in economic and demographic conditions over time. Additionally, it gives developers a high degree of control of what is proposed, as well as it allows the City to fulfill the desires of residents. To fulfill the city's vision and allow for a high degree of flexibility this element assigns each parcel in the planning area to two areas: General Plan Designations and Subarea Descriptions:

4.13.1 CGPU Project Site Land Use Designation

The CGPU assigned every parcel to a Land Use Designation to identify the intended future land use, development intensity and development character for the entire City (City of Coachella, 2014). The CGPU identifies six base designations to describe the preferred character of each area in the City. Then each parcel is further assigned one of the sixteen character designations to describe the types of allowed land uses, development intensity, network and connectivity, street design, parks and open space.

The project site's designated land use is within the Downtown Center (See to Figure 5.1). This designation includes the qualities summarized in Table 5.2.

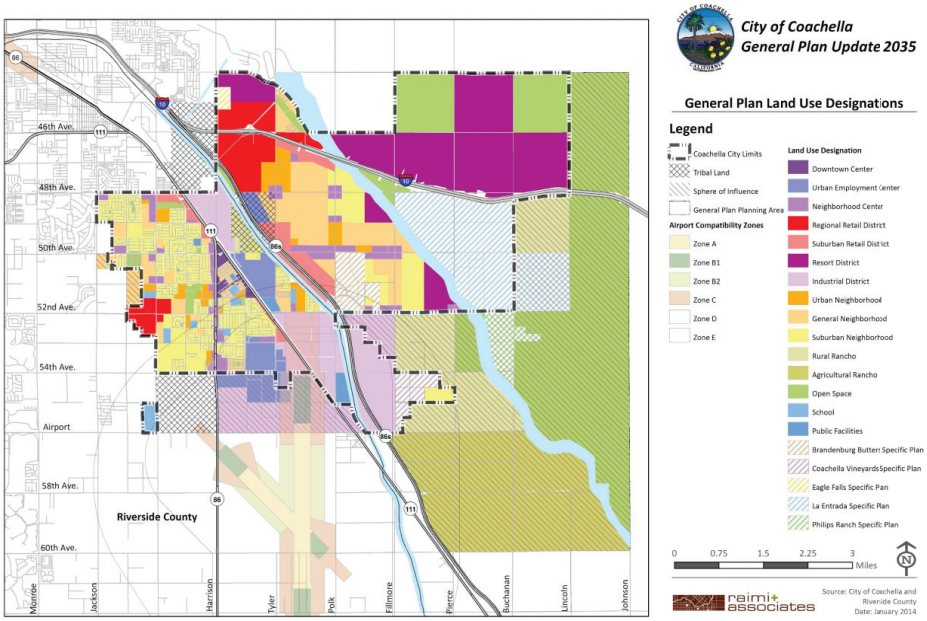


FIGURE 4.16: Project site's land use designation is Downtown Center

	RANCHOS		NEIGHBORHOODS			CENTERS			DISTRICTS			
	AGRICULTURAL	RURAL	SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD	GENERAL NEIGHBORHOOD	URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD	NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER	DOWNTOWN CENTER	URBAN EMPLOYMENT CENTER	SUBURBAN RETAIL DISTRICT	REGIONAL RETAIL DISTRICT	INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT	RESORT
RANGE OF COMPATIBLE LAND USES												
SINGLE FAMILY	S	P	P	P	S	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
MULTI-FAMILY	--	--	--	P	P	S	P	S	--	S	--	P
MOBILE HOME PARK	--	S	--	S	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION	--	--	--	--	S	S	P	S	P	P	--	P
GOLF COURSE	--	S	S	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
LODGING (HOTEL, MOTEL, B&B)	B&B only	S	--	--	S (no motel)	S	S (no motel)	S	S	P	--	P
AUTOMOTIVE (INCL GAS STATION)	--	--	--	--	--	S (with limitations)	--	--	P	S	S	--
RESTAURANT	--	--	--	--	S (with limitations)	P	P	S	P	S	S	S
DRIVE THROUGH RESTAURANT	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	S	S
RETAIL <10,000 SF	--	S	--	--	S (with limitations)	P	P	P	P	P	S	S
RETAIL > 10,000 SF	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	--	P	P	--	S
RETAIL > 35,000 SF	--	--	--	--	--	--	S (with limitations)	--	P	P	--	--
PERSONAL SERVICES (e.g., dry cleaner, travel agent, etc.)	--	--	--	--	S	P	P	S	P	S	S	S
MEDICAL OFFICE	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	P	P	S	--	--
OFFICE/RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	P	S	--	S	--
AGRICULTURE	P	P	S (interim)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	S
INDUSTRIAL/DISTRIBUTION	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	--	--	P	--
HOSPITAL / AIRPORT	--	Airport	--	--	--	--	Hospital	P	--	--	P	--
CIVIC AND GOVERNMENT	--	S	S	S	S	S	P	S	S	S	S	--
RESOURCE EXTRACTION	S	S (with limitations)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

KEY: P= Primary use S = Secondary Use - = Not allowed

	AGRICULTURAL	RURAL	SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD	GENERAL NEIGHBORHOOD	URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD	NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER	DOWNTOWN CENTER	URBAN EMPLOYMENT CENTER	SUBURBAN RETAIL DISTRICT	REGIONAL RETAIL DISTRICT	INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT	RESORT
DEVELOPMENT CHARACTERISTICS												
DU/AC (RANGE AND AVERAGE) (Density varies depending on building type)	1 DU per 40 acres	1 DU/2.5 acres to 1 DU/ac	2 – 8 DU/ac with 5 DU/ac average for new projects	7-25 DU/ac with 12 DU/ac average for new projects	20 – 35 DU/ac with 30 average for new projects	15-40 DU/ac	20 - 65 DU/ac	30-65 DU/ac	n/a	n/a	n/a	Up to 8 DU/ac
FAR	0.01	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.5	0.5 – 1.5	0.5 – 2.0	0.5 – 2.0D	0.35 – 1.0	0.35 – 2.0	0.1 – 2.0	0.1 max
STREET DESIGN, NETWORK AND CONNECTIVITY												
BLOCK PERIMETER Note: exceptions apply for natural and man-made barriers	n/a	n/a	3200 ft. max	2400 ft. max	2400 ft. max	1600 ft. max	2000 ft. max	2400 ft. max	3200 ft. max	4000 ft. max	4,800 ft. max	n/a
BLOCK LENGTHS (DESIRED) Note: exceptions apply for natural and man-made barriers	n/a	n/a	400-500 ft.	400-500 ft.	400-500 ft.	400-500 ft.	300-500 ft.	300-500 ft.	Up to 1000 ft.	Up to 1000 ft.	Up to 1200 ft.	n/a
EXTERNAL CONNECTIVITY (project or neighborhood boundary)	n/a	¼ mi. min	Min 1 connection every 800 ft.	Min 1 connection every 800 ft.	Min 1 connection every 800 ft.	Min 1 connection every 600 ft.	Min 1 connection every 600 ft.	Min 1 connection every 600 ft.	Min 1 connection every 800 ft.	Min 1 connection every 1000 ft.	Min 1 connection every 1200 ft.	Min 1 connection every ¼ mi.
GATED RESIDENTIAL AREAS	--	Y	--	--	--	--	--	--	n/a	n/a	n/a	Y
PARKS AND OPEN SPACE												
MINI PARK	--	--	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
NEIGHBORHOOD PARK	--	Y	Y	Y	Y	--	Y	--	--	--	Y	--
COMMUNITY PARK	Y	Y	Y	Y	--	--	--	--	--	Y	--	Y
PLAZA/GREEN	--	--	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	--	--
GREENWAY/PARKWAY	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SPECIAL USE	--	--	Y	Y	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
NATURE/OPEN SPACE	Y	Y	Y	Y	--	--	--	Y	--	--	--	Y
LINEAR PARK	--	Y	Y	Y	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	Y

TABLE 4.17: Land use designation's development chracteristics

Downtown Center Intent and Purpose As Neighborhood Centers bring residents of surrounding neighborhoods together by providing a convenient and congenial environment for everyday shopping and dining, the downtown brings the entire community together in a one-of-a-kind center that is the civic heart of the city (CGPU, 2014) . While other centers and districts are focused on bringing goods and services from around the region and the world to the residents of the city, the hallmark of downtown Coachella is unique local goods, services, culture and society. Downtown should integrate the seat of city government, include a higher educational institution and provide a variety of space for local startup businesses, local theater and entertainment, boutiques and studios focused on local goods, arts and crafts and restaurants featuring fresh local foods and produce. Most importantly, the downtown center is a place that belongs to all of the people of Coachella and provides a space where they can meet and greet one another as they enjoy the life of their town (CGPU, 2014).

Intended Physical Character: Every Downtown street is designed as an outdoor room, defined by active building facades and frontages that provide valuable addresses for shops, restaurants, hotels, residences and community facilities of many kinds. Plazas and squares punctuate the network of streets, providing larger, comfortable spaces for formal and informal gatherings, outdoor dining, public markets and special events. Buildings define the public realm with arcades, galleries and awnings that provide welcome shade for pedestrians. Large trees offer shade on hot days and moderate winds make open spaces more.

4.13.2 CGPU Subarea Description

The CGPU assigned every parcel in the City within a subarea description to define an overall vision and specific policy directions that supplements the General Plan Designation mentioned above, and the citywide goals and policies. Subareas are mainly for planning purposes and to ensure the City has unique and distinct areas (CGPU, 2014). Coachella is divided into 17 subareas. Each Subarea Description includes an overview if the existing conditions of the area, a vision statement for the area and specific policies that guide future development in the subareas.

The project site lies in Subarea Two, identified as the Downtown area. The vision and direction of development within this area is similar as to the Downtown Center. The Downtown area will continue as the physical, civic, and cultural heart of the City of Coachella. In addition this area identifies that as the City grows, the downtown area will grow. These qualities are summarized in the CGPU as follows:

As the City grows, new civic uses, cultural facilities, housing and retail will be located in Downtown to enhance its role as the central meeting and gathering place for Coachella residents. Sixth Street, the central spine of Downtown, will continue to evolve as a lively, mixed-use street offering shady walkways, cooling water fountains, outdoor dining and unique shopping. New mixed-use, town-scale buildings that respect the heritage and community values

of Coachella will be built to expand the retail, commercial and cultural offerings. The existing residential areas north and south of the central core will evolve over time as existing homes are upgraded and new housing added.

To specifically address any implementation in the area each subarea includes policy directions that supplement the CGPU Designations and the citywide policy and goals. The policy direction for the downtown area includes the following: (CGPU, 2014).

1. Actively facilitate the implementation of the Pueblo Viejo Plan through appropriate new development approvals and targeted public investments.
2. Ensure new development does not conflict with the Pueblo Viejo Plan. If there are inconsistencies between the Pueblo Viejo Plan and this General Plan, the General Plan shall govern.
3. Recognizing that Downtown is the heart of the City, encourage development there.
4. Focus a variety of cultural arts and cultural uses in the Downtown.
5. Improve Sixth Street as the "main street" of Downtown with a pedestrian-oriented environment and a diverse mix of retail and commercial activity.
6. Maintain a strong civic focus and ensure that City Hall remains in the area.
7. Pursue mixed-use development on vacant parcels and create a new gateway to Downtown at the intersection of Sixth Street and Harrison Street.
8. Improve residential neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown by upgrading existing housing and infilling vacant and underutilized parcels with a diverse mix of housing types.
9. Conduct streetscape improvements throughout Downtown to make the area safe and inviting for pedestrians.
10. Develop a plan to provide for the evolution of Downtown and its expansion east across the railroad tracks into an active, livable civic core, appropriate for a large city.
11. Seek to construct multiple, safe connections across the railroad tracks from Downtown to the Downtown Expansion subarea.
12. Work with local and regional transit and transportation agencies to establish a transportation center in Downtown provides for bus and rail transit to the City.
13. Work with State and regional agencies to bring high frequency, regional transit to the Downtown.

4.14 City of Coachella Zoning Code

The City of Coachella Zoning Code is an implementation tool of the 2014 Coachella General Plan Update used to facilitate the urban form of new development through design standards and

specifications such as building heights allowed uses, lot coverage and setback requirements. Currently the project site is zoned as C-G General Commercial. This zone is intended to provide for and encourage the orderly development of commercial areas designed to serve the community-wide needs. Such areas provide a wide variety of goods and services, and must be consistent with the overall development of the city and its environs. The provisions of this zone are intended to insure that such commerce will be compatible with adjacent, noncommercial development, and to minimize the undesirable effects of heavy traffic, type of activity, and to set forth site requirements. Property development standards include the following:

Property development standards.

A. Lot Requirements.

1. Minimum Lot Size. Parcels not contiguous to C-G zoned property shall have a minimum area of five acres.

2. Minimum Lot Width. Fifty (50) feet.

3. Minimum Lot Depth. None.

4. Maximum Lot Coverage. No limit.

B. Yard Requirements.

1. Front Yard. Where one or bot h adjoining zones are residential, a yard shall be provided which is equal in depth to the average of the required front yards of the adjoining zones.

2. Side Yard. Where a C-G zone adjoins a street or residential zone, there shall be a sideyard of not less than ten (10) feet on the side or sides adjoining said street or residential zone. In the case of a reversed corner lot, the side yard adjoining the street shall be not less than the required front yard of the adjoining key lot to the rear.

3. Rear Yard. Where the C-G zone adjoins a residential zone, there shall be a rear yard of not less than ten (10) feet adjoining that residential zone. This shall not apply where there exists a public alley separating the two zones.

4. Permitted Encroachments in Required Yards. The yards required in subsections 1—3 of this section may be used as part of an automobile parking area, provided however that a minimum three-foot wide screen planting strip shall be maintained adjacent to the planned highway right-of-way lines.

C. Height Limits.

1. The maximum height of any building within one hundred thirty (130) feet of any residential zone shall be two stories or thirty-five (35) feet, whichever is less. Vehicular rights-of-way shall be included in calculating distance. The distance of one hundred thirty (130) feet is a minimum setback and setbacks requirements may be increased based on

safety, privacy, views, noise and light issues.

2. The maximum height of all other buildings shall be fifty (50) feet or three stories, whichever is less. (City of Coachella, 2016)

However, to better implement the new land use designations proposed by the CGPU a Zoning Consistency Analysis was prepared by Raimi and Associates for the City of Coachella. The analysis identifies where modifications to existing zoning codes could be made in the in the intervening time. In addition, it gives the city and developers greater flexibility in the allowed uses and facilitates development types that complement the CGPU's vision.

The Zoning Consistency Analysis identifies that the project site's proposed zone (Downtown Center) is consistent to the existing land use (General Commercial), only requiring minor adjustments such as minor height, density, or use adjustments to conform to the CGPU vision. Unlike other zones, this zone will not require a change or replacement in allowed uses in order to be consistent with the new land zones outlined in the CGPU. Furthermore, the existing allowed uses will remain stagnant upon the adoption of the CGPU.

4.15 Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan

As mentioned in the introduction, the project site is within the 288 acre area addressed in the Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan (CGPU, 2014). The plan was adopted by City Council in 2009 as an urban design plan, and development guide that includes Coachella's Downtown area. It is the foundation of a community driven vision which empowers stakeholders and facilitates positive change within downtown Coachella (City of Coachella, 2010). The plan's vision statement is as follows:

"Pueblo Viejo is the civic and cultural heart of Coachella. The community is proud of the historic charm, locally-owned businesses, and vibrant civic center. As you enter through the attractive gateways on Sixth Street, you are immersed in a lively street scene offering shady walkways, cooling water fountains, outdoor dining, and unique shopping. Once empty lots are now filled with mixed-use buildings that respect the heritage, climate, and community values. Family-friendly events and festivals fill the streets and public spaces. As you relax in the clean, well maintained civic center core, you know . . . you have arrived in Pueblo Viejo!"

Implementing the plan is a priority for the City. It is to be referenced through the revitalization process for any new, rehabilitation and/or remodeling projects within the downtown area (CGPU 2014). The plan acts as a tool to amend the zoning code and sets specific criteria for development, specifically within the Downtown area. Nonetheless, it is important to have proper plan compliance between the Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan and the CGPU to prevent negative impacts, and if there are any inconsistencies between such plans, the General Plan shall govern (CGPU, 2014).

FIGURE 4.18: Pueblo Viejo Vision

The Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan includes the Conceptual Vision Plan section which is critical to the development of the project site. The Conceptual Vision Plan highlights characteristics that are expected to be implemented on the site. The main components are summarized as follows:

Architectural Character- A mix of architectural styles and details to create an authentic and timeless downtown that includes traditional downtown architecture, mission revival, and contemporary.

Site Planning and Land Uses - It encourages future mixed use structures to be two-to-three stories at this intersection to create iconic gateways as it lies within one of the three Major Gateways identified by stakeholders. The gateway will play an important role, and is considered a significant entry point into Pueblo Viejo, as well as the downtown.

Infill Development Sites and Catalyst Projects- The project site is envisioned to include a solid mix of ground-floor retail and public gathering plaza space fronting Harrison Street on the north property, with active senior residential units located on upper floors (up to three stories).

Conclusion

In conclusion, all three documents acknowledge that the project site is one of many parcels along a mixed-use designated area. The site is encouraged to be developed two-to-three stories high creating an iconic entrance to the downtown corridor. According to City Staff, the Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan is the most important document to adhere to with any development in the downtown area, and specifically the project site. The project's design characteristics shall primarily consider the Pueblo Viejo Plan. Additionally, since the City's Zoning Code and the CGPU's land use designation are consistent as defined by the Zoning Consistency Analysis, the site does not require a change or replacement in allowed uses in order to be consistent with the new land zones outlined in the CGPU.

5 CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

5 CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

This section introduces the foundations for the development and design of the Vista del Sol project. It explains the importance of urban design and analyzes the main principles. Then case studies that share significant characteristics with the proposed development are analyzed, and rated according to its performance relative to the urban design principles.

5.1 Urban Design Qualities

The purpose of urban design is to produce attractive, high quality, sustainable places which people will want to live, work, and relax. Urban design is the art of making places for people that are functional and attractive. It concerns the connections between people and places, movement and urban form, and nature and the built environment (Design Council, 2000). The form of buildings, structures and spaces is the physical expression of urban design (Arida, 2010). Hence urban design focuses on the urban space created through the effects of planning and realized through the physicality of architectural buildings (Design Council, 2000).

Good urban design is important everywhere, but particularly fundamental for the health of downtowns. As stated in the Quantum and Urban Design (Arida, 2010), good urban design should be defined as a multidimensional interdisciplinary interface, with the responsibility to manage and transform the interactions of the different aspects of urban life into a physical and/or usable form. However, it is difficult rate because no two places are identical and there is no such thing as a blueprint for good design (Design Council, 2000). Good design has to be able to respond to the site, context, function, market, and community. It always arises from a thorough and caring understanding of place and context (Design Council, 2000).

According to Ewing there are eight urban design qualities that should be taken into consideration for the future development of the Harrison and 6th Street Downtown Expansion into an attractive destination for residents and visitors. The following urban design qualities - Imageability, enclosure, legibility, human scale, transparency, linkage, complexity, and coherence – are particularly important for the quality of downtowns and guides development within them.

5.1.1 Imageability

Imageability is the quality of the space that makes it distinct, recognizable and memorable. It is a place has high imageablity when specific physical elements and their arrangement capture attention, evoke feelings, and create a lasting impression. Kevin Lynch defines imageablility as the quality in a physical object which gives it a high probability of evoking a strong image in any given observer. It is that shape, color or arrangement which facilitate the making of a vividly identified, powerfully structured which is highly useful for mental images (Larice, 2013). Kevin Lynch refers to: paths, edges, landmarks, districts, and nodes, as elements that regularly overlap and furnish, and work to make the image of a space (Larice and Mcdonld, 2013).

5.1.2 Enclosure

Enclosure gives open space its definition and connection, creating workable links. It refers to the degree to which streets and other public spaces are visually defined by buildings, walls, trees and other elements. Spaces where the height of vertical elements is proportionally related to the width of the space between them have a room-like quality. Enclosure is often considered as the outdoor room that offers a sense of position of identity with the surrounding environment. In an urban setting, enclosure is formed by lining the street or plaza with unbroken building fronts of roughly equal height (Reid, Ewing and Handy, 2009)

5.1.3 Legibility

Ewing et al. refers to legibility to the ease with which the spatial structure of a place can be understood and navigated as a whole. The legibility of a place is improved by a street or pedestrian network that provides travelers with a sense of orientation and relative location using physical elements that serve as reference points. As explained in The Image of the City (Lynch, 1961), a legible space is one whose constituent parts are easily identifiable, and are easily grouped into an over-all pattern. A distinct and ordered environment helps the resident orient himself, and place parts of the space into coherent categories.

Imageability: Streets filled with people, many signs, and strong landmarks make Time Square in New York City a very distinct place


Enclosure: The buildings and uniform street trees create a room-like effect by limiting long sight lines and views of open sky.


Legibility: A particular visual quality gives ease to with a type characters can be easily read.

Human scale refers to the use within development of elements which relate well in size to an individual human being and their assembly in a way which makes people feel comfortable rather than overwhelmed. The size, texture, and articulation of physical elements that match the size and proportion of humans, and equally important correspond to the speed at which people walk (Ewing et al. 2006). Physical elements that contribute to human scale include: building details, pavement texture, street trees and street furniture. For example, the presence of street furniture, and protection from traffic increases human scale because they are street level elements that impact people.

5.1.5 Transperency

According to Ewing et al., transparency refers to the degree to which people can see or perceive what lies beyond the edge of a street or other public space and, more specifically the degree to which people can see or perceive human activity beyond the edge. Physical elements that influence transparency include walls, windows, doors, fences, landscaping and openings into a midblock (Ewing et al. 2006). For example, a continuous street wall with active uses and many windows at street level make an area very transparent. A place that has building not too far back from the street edge, continuous exposure to uses that are clear and accessible increase transparency. It is more than just large quantities of glass on buildings.

5.1.6 Linkage

Linkage refers to physical and visual connections from building to street, building to building, space to space, or one side of the street to the other which tend to unify disparate elements. Tree lines, building projections, marked crossings all create linkage. Linkage can occur longitudinally along a street or laterally across a street (Ewing et al. 2006). For example good linkage is often associated with the grid pattern and the ease of interconnect and identify connections to disparate elements.

Human Scale: Active uses at street level, restricted sight lines, small buildings, a narrow street, and street furniture aid human scale.

Transparency: Windows at street level make this scene very transparent

Linkage: Tree lines, building projections, marked bike lanes helps unify disparate elements and create good linkage.

5.1.7 Complexity

According to Amos Rapoport (1990), complexity is related to the number of negotiable differences to which a viewer is exposed per unit time. This is important because human beings are most comfortable with receiving information at a usable rates; too little information produces sensory deprivation, and too much creates sensory overload (Ewing et al. 2006). Complexity results from varying building shapes, sizes, materials, colors, architecture and ornamentation (Ewing et al. 2006). Streets with high complexity can provide many things to look at giving the visitor a psychological effect that makes walking more pleasurable and shorter. For example, the addition of trees is used to add complexity to modern architecture that lacks ornamentation and texture.

5.1.8 Coherence

According to Ewing et al., coherence refers to the sense of visual order which is influenced by the consistency and complementarity of scale, character, and arrangement of building, landscaping, street furniture, paving materials, and other physical elements. For example a coherent place is balanced between different building design and height, which can be accomplished through well thought of zoning regulations.

Urban Design Qualities Conclusion

For the purpose of this project, the urban design qualities mentioned will be used throughout the design and be referred to as the project's design principles. These urban design qualities will help link the built environment to active living. They will be used to develop the perceptual qualities of a built environment which extend from the physical measures of walkability such as density, street connectivity, and distance to parks. These qualities reflect the general way in which people perceive and interact with the environment, and focuses in creating quality streetscapes. They help create meaningful and attractive spaces and increase the quality of the walking environment.

5.2 Best Practices for Downtown Development

It is important to discuss the characteristics of large scale projects as catalysts for successful downtown development. Across the country, cities and towns have focused on revitalizing and strategically developing land in their downtowns for various competitive reasons. Although, the following case studies are not all located in a downtown corridor, they were chosen because they are excellent examples of developments similar to the typology proposed for the Vista del Sol site. And most importantly, they demonstrate how the urban design qualities in Section 5.1 can be used to create an inviting atmosphere.

The selected case studies and the Vista del Sol project share the following characteristics: include mixed use development, developed on vacant or underutilized land, located in areas facing troubles economically, located in areas that lack attractiveness, and are of similar size. The analysis begins with a brief overview of the nature of development highlighting their most appealing aspects. Then it builds upon Ewing's urban design principles in order to understand and evaluate urban environments using the urban design matrix. The urban design matrix includes the eight urban design qualities in rows, and the score measurement in columns. The maximum score a project can receive is 16 points; 16-13 good, 12-9 fair, and less than 8 can be considered poor urban design qualities. These case studies will provide innovative ideas and possibilities that fit the context of this project, and will open ideas to help make decisions for the design of the project.

	PRINCIPLE	GOOD (2)	FAIR (1)	POOR (1)
1	Imageabilty			
2	Enclosure			
3	Legibility			
4	Human-Scale			
5	Transperency			
6	Linkage			
7	Complexity			
8	Coherence			

5.2.1 The Market Common, Clarendon

Located in Arlington, Virginia, the Market Common, Clarendon is a mixed-use project that offers a vibrant urban environment on what used to be a 600-space surface parking lot for a Sears and automotive centers. The project lies on 13.9 acres of land and consists of one superblock (phase I) and two smaller parcels (phase II) (Schmitz et al., 2006). The project provides 101,300 square feet of office space, 303,200 square feet of retail; 87 residential townhouses; and 300 apartment units. In addition, two large parks and four smaller parks to serve outdoor space of residents.

The Market Common, Calderon, is located on the Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor, a similar corridor to the Harrison Corridor by the Vista del Sol project. The project is in an area filled with aging retail and office buildings, surrounded by single family homes. However, although the project is surrounded by residents, and three miles away from the Metrorail subway system that serves as the central rail stop in the corridor the area lacked attractiveness and was not inviting to businesses.

FIGURE 5.7: The Market Calderon is a pedestrian oriented neighborhood allong a busy segment.

From the initial stages in planning the Market Common, McCaffery Interests, the developers had a dual commitment in creating a walkable place and finding the lowest and best use visible throughout every aspect of the project (Schmitz et al., 2006). One of their main objectives was to create and emphasize connections to the urban street. McCaffery Interests phased the project in a way that promoted more businesses to flourish in nearby areas that were under-maintained and decaying to invite more activity while also complementing the uses of neighboring businesses. Street oriented storefronts and rear parking transformed numerous surface parking lots into residential and office buildings. Which also influenced businesses across the ex-parking areas to be brought back to life due to the increased pedestrian activity. Businesses began to invest in rehabilitating the aesthetics of the buildings as more people moved in to the mixed-use buildings with retail and commercial uses on the ground floor and residential units above.

Additionally, to catch the attention of motorists from both sides of the adjacent corridor, the Market Common focuses the design to the central courtyard. A large rectangular, landscaped courtyard is between residential and office buildings, and includes a bandstand shell, a small playground, gazebo, and a large garden/water feature accessible to motorists. Parallel parking is included on both sides of a two way loop around the courtyard that lead to entrances to the structured parking garage. The parallel parking spaces along the courtyard adds an urban character to the Market Common because it provides parking for quick stops and helps calm traffic (Schmitz et al., 2006).

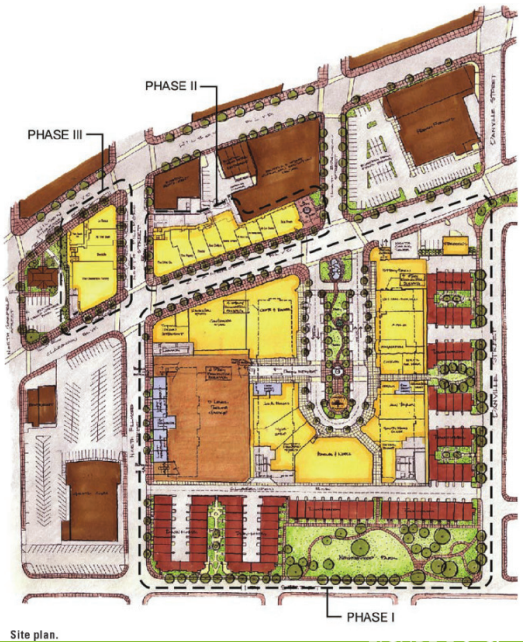


FIGURE 5.8: Site Plan

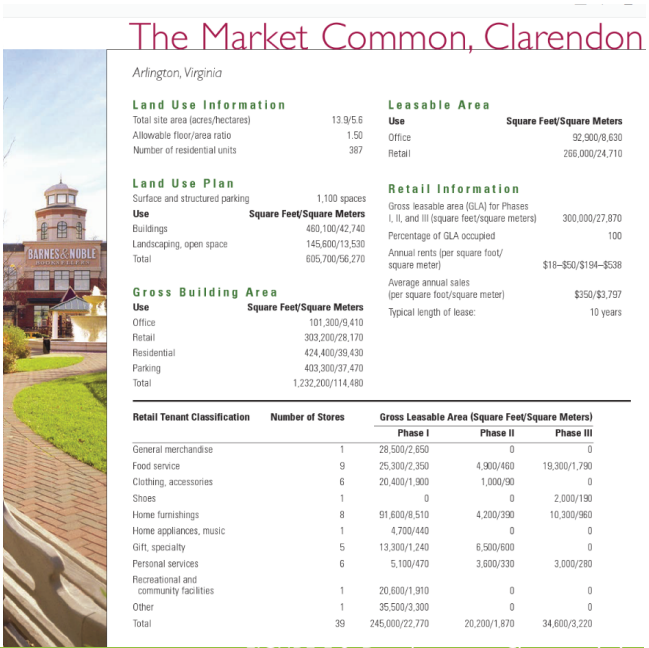


FIGURE 5.9: Development Characteristics

Different architecture firms were hired to design various aspects of the project to create a unique environment that consists of different but cohesive styles. To create a rich and varied environment, the design process involved intensive public participation with architects,

developers, and regulating entities. It also disclosed ideas and concepts early on to achieve a common vision for the final outcome of the project. This lead to the selection of materials that would work in all parts of the development and be used by different architects. It also allowed retailers who were eager to take advantage of street exposure to increase the degree of architectural autonomy and get support for their branding and marketing efforts.

5.2.1.1 Urban Design Matrix Evaluation

The Market Common, Calderon is an excellent example of a mixed-use development taking advantage of its surroundings. The Market Common scored on the urban design matrix with a total of fifteen (15) points. It pays attention to existing residents, transportation, businesses and neighborhoods, and created pedestrian oriented and walkable development. The development respects human scale and produces highly coherent places with its balance between different building design and height. The visually appealing facades and well thought out landscaping features that interconnect with various routes add to the quality of urban design of this project that people can visit by foot, transit or car are prime example of linkage and imageablity working together.

	PRINCIPLE	GOOD (2)	FAIR (1)	POOR (1)
1	Imageabilty	X		
2	Enclosure	X		
3	Legibility	X		
4	Human-Scale	X		
5	Transperency		X	
6	Linkage	X		
7	Complexity	X		
8	Coherence	X		

5.2.2 Paseo Colorado

Located in Pasadena, California, Paseo Colorado is a mixed-use development situated on a three-square-block city village within Pasadena's Civic Center district. Paseo Colorado and the Vista del Sol development share significant features. On the rear side of the Paseo Colorado is the City Hall and the historic central library, similar to the downtown Vista del Sol site which is also situated adjacent to City Hall and City's Library. Paseo Colorado is located within walking distance to key transportation linkages which is a vital characteristic to any future development on the Vista Del Sol site. The 2014 General Plan Update states that the downtown area is going to be linked to a light rail station that will connect with the downtown to the other neighboring cities. Paseo Colorado faces Colorado Boulevard which is a major thoroughfare linking old Pasadena with other districts; similar to Vista del Sol which is adjacent to the Harrison Street corridor. Both the Pasadena and Coachella general plans identified project sites as vital to the community because they are adjacent to thoroughfares that can encourage more people to walk and visit the city's various attractions.

Paseo Colorado includes a two-level underground parking structure, and a mix of retail, restaurant, entertainment, and residential uses. It includes 56 retail shops, a department store, seven destination restaurants, six cafes, a health club, super market, a 14 screen cinema, and 387 rental housing units.

FIGURE 5.10: Paseo Colorado adjcanet to Pasadena's major thoroughfare

From the 1950s to 1970s retail shifted eastward of the Colorado Boulevard, leading to the abandonment and decay of the site. In the 1970 the city began to attempt to revitalize the site through a redevelopment agency. By 1980 Plaza Pasadena, demolished 35 structures, some considered to be historic, and relocated 122 businesses and households, constructed public improvements, and sold the air rights at a highly subsidized rate. The plaza was opened as suburban mall development, destroying the pedestrian and retail continuity of Colorado Boulevard. The mall laid right on the core of the street's axis, a key North-South Street that blocked the library at one end and the civic auditorium in the other. In the 1980s and 1990s, though there were various efforts to bring life back by the developers and building owners, the mall began to decline and vacancy rates increased.

To revive the plaza, the City of Pasadena formed the Civic Task Force in 1997. TrizecHahn Development Corporation who had previously ownership interest participated in the Civic Task Force and formulated objectives. The objectives where: to restore the city street grid, reintroduce retail activity to the Colorado Boulevard, provide pedestrian circulation and gathering spaces, and offer a mix of uses, including housing and retail. TrizecHahn teamed up with Post Properties an experienced developer of urban housing, and the design was led by Kuhn Architects.

Developers and the design team of Paseo Colorado sought to recreate the intimate scale of Old Pasadena, using textures and materials that would do so. To communicate to prospective commercial tenants of the criteria for the design of store frontages, the design and developers

teams published the Athens of the West, Pasadena Style. Additionally TrizecHahn published another text to describe technical criteria and their philosophy and objectives. The design inspired individual tenants to contribute to Paseo Colorado's unique environment.

Inspired by the Old Town Pasadena design, Paseo Colorado reflects Mediterranean motifs and materials, though in a more modern idiom (Schmitz et al., 2006). Facades are finished in smooth plaster and colored in various earth tones and pastels. It includes both modern and art deco decorative lighting, and craftsman style lanterns hanging on the paseo that provide a canopy of light. Throughout the development there are also many custom designed elements such as stair railings.

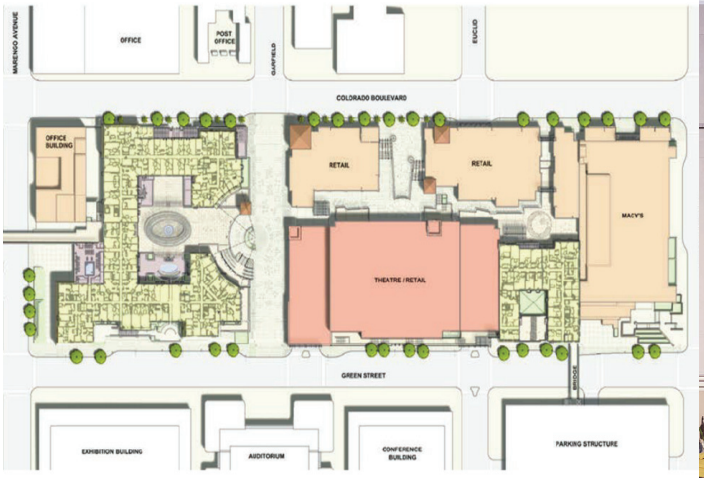
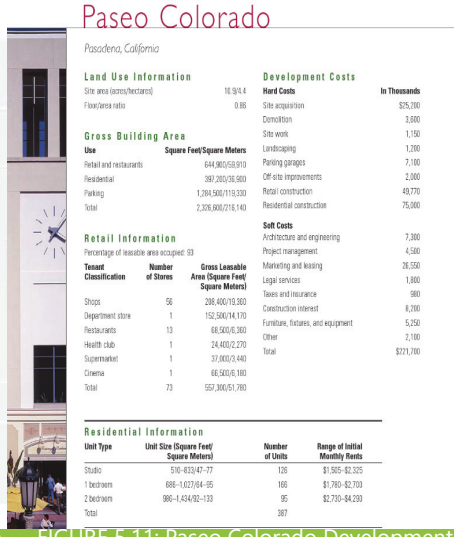


FIGURE 5.10: Paseo Colorado Site Plan



Paseo Colorado

Pasadena, California

Land Use Information

Site area (acres/hectares)	16.9/4.4
Floor/area ratio	0.88

Gross Building Area

Use	Square Feet/Square Meters
Retail and restaurants	644,960/59,910
Residential	397,260/36,900
Parking	1,284,500/119,330
Total	2,326,600/216,140

Retail Information

Percentage of leasable area occupied: 93

Tenant Classification	Number of Stores	Gross Leasable Area (Square Feet/ Square Meters)
Shops	56	286,400/19,360
Department store	1	152,500/14,170
Restaurants	13	68,500/6,360
Health club	1	24,400/2,270
Supermarket	1	37,000/3,440
Cinema	1	68,500/6,160
Total	73	557,300/51,780

Development Costs

Hard Costs	In Thousands
Site acquisition	$25,700
Demolition	3,600
Site work	1,150
Landscaping	1,200
Parking garages	7,100
Off-site improvements	2,000
Retail construction	49,770
Residential construction	75,000
Soft Costs	
Architecture and engineering	7,300
Project management	4,500
Marketing and leasing	26,550
Legal services	1,800
Taxes and insurance	980
Construction interest	8,200
Furniture, fixtures, and equipment	5,250
Other	2,100
Total	$221,700

Residential Information

Unit Type	Unit Size (Square Feet/ Square Meters)	Number of Units	Range of Initial Monthly Rents
Studio	510–833/47–77	126	$1,505–$2,325
1 bedroom	686–1,027/64–95	166	$1,760–$2,700
2 bedroom	986–1,434/92–133	95	$2,730–$4,200
Total		387	

FIGURE 5.11: Paseo Colorado Development

The development includes both street-fronting retail space and interior-block walkways lined up with more intimately scaled shops. It is built right up to the street-facing property line to cover the blank brick façade of the department store with new shops that continue the façade line and provide additional street activity. Paseo Colorado seeks to restore the intent of the 1925 City Beautiful Movement (Schmitz et al., 2006) by incorporating a 77-foot wide pedestrian walkway that is flanked by formal plantings and period light fixtures, thus revealing previously hidden vistas. The midblock walkway varies in in width from 43 feet to 18 feet to create a more intimate space and invites exploration, as on end cannot be seen fully from the other. Residential units include many amenities such as rooftop courtyards and pools at a short walk to shops, restaurants, and a cinema.

5.2.2.1 Urban Design Matrix Evaluation

Paseo Colorado's success can be attributed to the way in which its urban design addresses context, uses, and architectural style. The project gives the visitor a tangible sense of place (Schmitz et al., 2006), by using the urban design principles. With a total of fifteen (15) points, Paseo Colorado exhibits good urban design. The only quality it scores fairly in (one point) is

transparency. Although there is a mid-block plaza there are areas that are not easily perceived beyond the edge. The addition to the enhancement of the pedestrian fabric, downtown Pasadena also benefited the developers because it created a walkable mixed use environments prominent linkage. Replacing the inward facing development to a mixed use project that reintroduces street front retail, providing: interior and mid-block retail space, restores the urban block pattern, and the view axis of the project with respect to neighboring buildings. Thus, adding human scale and coherence. The mixture of uses and market segments has shown it success with high occupancy not only from weekend crowds, but also adds to the coherence and visual richness of the place.

	PRINCIPLE	GOOD (2)	FAIR (1)	POOR (1)
1	Imageabilty	X		
2	Enclosure	X		
3	Legibility	X		
4	Human-Scale	X		
5	Transperency		X	
6	Linkage	X		
7	Complexity	X		
8	Coherence	X		

5.2.3 Saffron

Located in Sammamish, Washington, Saffron is a small intensively designed urban village that shares significant features with the Vista del Sol development. Saffron is a pedestrian environment within an entirely auto dependent context, similar to the context of the Vista del Sol project. Both are located at corners of an existing major intersections, and next to the city's busiest corridor. Both are bounded by multifamily residential development consisting of small tracts of housing communities. Like the case of the Vista del Sol project both sites have been rezoned to mixed–use to encourage more dense development. And, not only are both sites similar in size, they are also neighbors to underutilized commercial strips.

Saffron is located 30 miles east of Seattle, and a 20-minute drive from Microsoft's main campus in Redmond. In the early 2000s, the idea for Saffron grew from the realization that parts of the area were being transformed from rural areas to urban enclaves. Urban enclaves began to be developed when the city implemented a growth planning measure to preserve rural and natural resource land. The measure introduced important development opportunities and rezoned the site in an effort to encourage more dense development along the city's busiest corridor. During this time Joe Blattner and Michael Corliss purchased the site as a passive investment and took advantage of the measure. They decided to develop a walkable place that could serve as the beginnings of a pedestrian friendly mixed-use downtown for the City of Sammamish.

To refine ideas for the project, Blattner and Corliss hired Bungardner Architects through a competitive process. Their vision was to urbanize the suburban pattern by creating a street

grid instead of surrounding the development with parking. They wanted to create a pedestrian friendly development that is crossed by an irregular network of major arterials. Embracing this vision the design team was able to accommodate 99 apartment units situated above 49,714 square feet of ground level retail, restaurants, and professional services offices all located on one 4.4 acre block. They divided the block using a street and sidewalk grid, integrating adjacent arterials into the project. And, to accommodate less surface parking and make the project more pedestrian friendly, they included an underground parking structures which accommodates more than half of the parking needed.

FIGURE 5.11: Saffron 's edgy architecture

FIGURE 5.12: Automobile-oriented signage

Saffron is designed to be an inviting and visually strong environment for passerby civilians that also provides an interesting and comfortable place for residents and visitors. Pedestrian amenities include various sheltered landscape and outdoor sitting areas for residents. It includes high speed wiring in all residential units and electrical outlets in outdoor public spaces. It contains large sidewalks that are lined up with shops and awnings. To attract motorists the building's massing is designed to go "up and out" from the intersection to provide an eye-catching ground-level commercial storefront near the corner (Schmitz et al., 2006). This makes the development more approachable to cars because parking and vehicular circulation is highly visible from surrounding arterials. It also allows pedestrians to be seen from outside the development. The project also includes three different scales of signage in the development appeal to motorists passing by at highway speed, slower passing by traffic, and a purely pedestrian scale.

Saffron includes various signature architectural elements to stand out from the surrounding environment and appeal to a younger population. It is inspired from drive-ins in the 1950s, and uses bright colors, sharp angles, sculptural elements, and metal decals. It includes a rich palette of metal siding and details that contrast to the surrounding residential developments. An array of materials are used throughout the development to deepen visual complexity; corrugated metal, diagonal-shingle metal, box rib siding, steel and wood. At the same time it uses abundant plantings and artworks soften the edginess of the architecture.

The ambitious and unique design of Saffron, and the balance in designing for retail and residential tenants, made Saffron successful. It was able to draw the projected single professionals from the nearby high tech industry. Additionally, a variety of commercial tenants such as fitness facilities, health care centers, restaurants, and retailers quickly filled up vacancies and established a mixed-use lifestyle center.

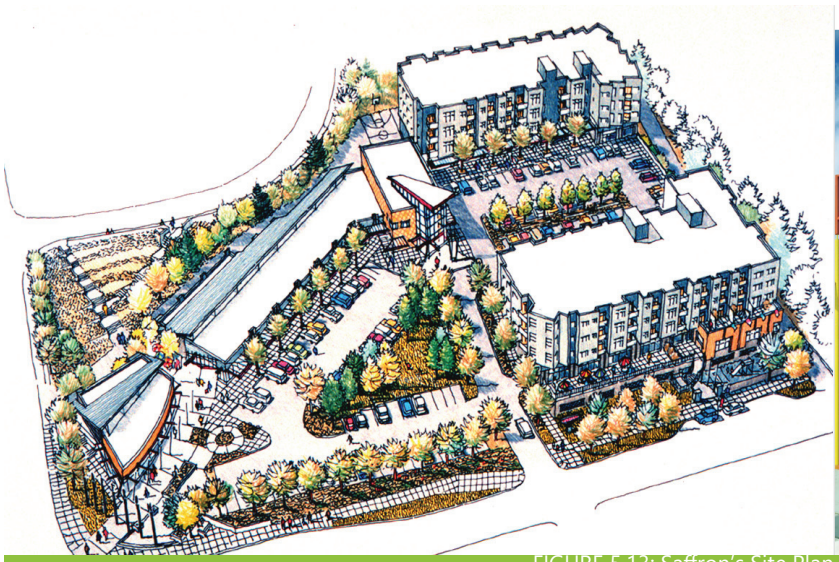
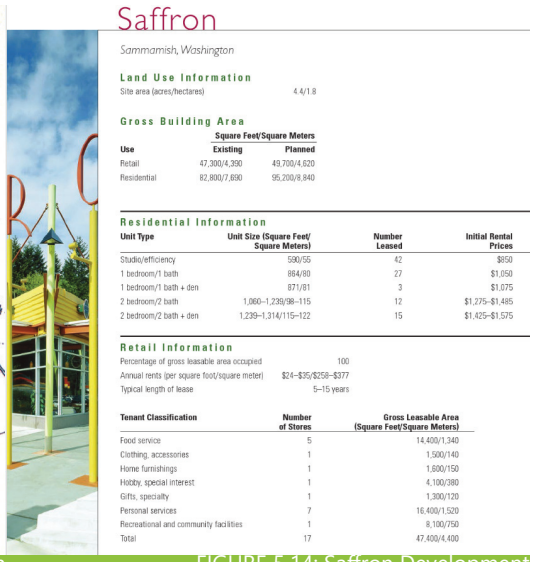


FIGURE 5.13: Saffron's Site Plan



Saffron

Sammamish, Washington

Land Use Information

Site area (acres/hectares) 4.4/1.8

Gross Building Area

	Square Feet/Square Meters	
Use	Existing	Planned
Retail	47,300/4,390	49,700/4,620
Residential	82,800/7,690	95,200/8,840

Residential Information

Unit Type	Unit Size (Square Feet/ Square Meters)	Number Leased	Initial Rental Prices
Studio/efficiency	590/55	42	$850
1 bedroom/1 bath	864/80	27	$1,050
1 bedroom/1 bath + den	871/81	3	$1,075
2 bedroom/2 bath	1,060–1,239/98–115	12	$1,275–$1,485
2 bedroom/2 bath + den	1,239–1,314/115–122	15	$1,425–$1,575

Retail Information

Percentage of gross leasable area occupied	100
Annual rents (per square foot/square meter)	$24–$35/$258–$377
Typical length of lease	5–15 years

Tenant Classification	Number of Stores	Gross Leasable Area (Square Feet/Square Meters)
Food service	5	14,400/1,340
Clothing, accessories	1	1,500/140
Home furnishings	1	1,600/150
Hobby, special interest	1	4,100/380
Gifts, speciality	1	1,300/120
Personal services	7	16,400/1,520
Recreational and community facilities	1	8,100/750
Total	17	47,400/4,400

FIGURE 5.14: Saffron Development

5.2.3.1 Urban Design Matrix Evaluation

With a total of sixteen (16) points, Saffron exhibits good urban design in all principles. It proves it is possible to create an urban setting within a suburban environment and demonstrates the benefits urban design. It does an exceptional job with legibility with its variation of signage and visibility to the project within and from the exterior. It, additionally exhibits great linkage from buildings to the street, while human scale is not lost as sidewalks and street to building ratio is comfortable for walking. Saffron is able to incorporate automobile and pedestrian environments, urban and suburban scales, as well as residential and retail uses.

	PRINCIPLE	GOOD (2)	FAIR (1)	POOR (1)
1	Imageabilty	X		
2	Enclosure	X		
3	Legibility	X		
4	Human-Scale	X		
5	Transperency	x		
6	Linkage	X		
7	Complexity	X		
8	Coherence	X		

5.2.4 Case Study Conclusion

In conclusion each case study is an example of a successful urban environment. Though there is no set formula in providing attractive and pedestrian friendly environments, these case studies demonstrate how critical it is for a project to implement urban design qualities as they are planned and designed. Each case resulted in pedestrian friendly projects, taking advantage of under or un-developed land in a critical area of a town or city that fits the needs of the community. Using similar, but not identical elements, the projects influence social, economic, and recreational activity which is a realizable objective when the location and characteristics of a project are appropriate. Additionally, creating a pedestrian friendly environment is very important to develop a project next to a decomposing downtown area such as the case for the City of Coachella. Lessons learned include: the importance of mixing uses, the importance of a place with diverse functions, and the importance of pedestrian oriented accessibility and usability of a project. Walkable places within each community proved successful in these case studies, therefore, the Vista del Sol project will incorporate these urban design qualities and methods to transform the site into a denser attractive location, as well as improve the image and function of the downtown as a whole.

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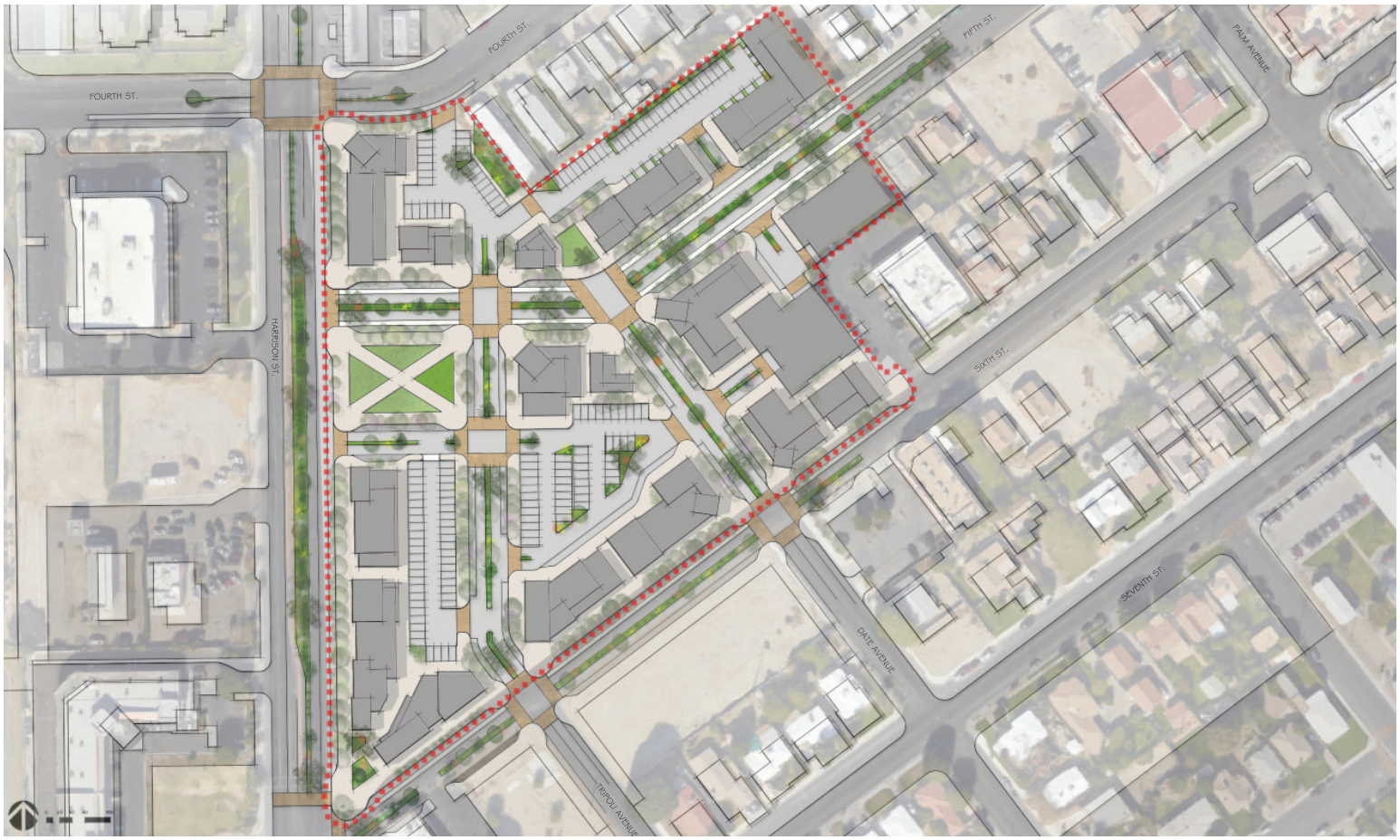
6 DESIGN PROPOSAL



6 DESIGN PROPOSAL

6.1 Vision

Vista del Sol will be an iconic, mixed-use, pedestrian oriented development located at the gateway of downtown Coachella. It will transform the existing brownfield into a sustainable and dynamic hub to serve as a catalyst to revitalize downtown Coachella. It will provide a wide range of amenities and services to attract a diverse population, which will offer new opportunities for business and entertainment. It will be attractive to passerby motorists and comfortable to residents. Vista del Sol will include an active and attractive outdoor scene with outdoor dining, retail and public gathering spaces to encourage visitors to walk the core of the Downtown. In addition, Vista del Sol will preserve and embody the city's heritage and culture promoting a local and unique environment.

6.2 Conceptual Diagram

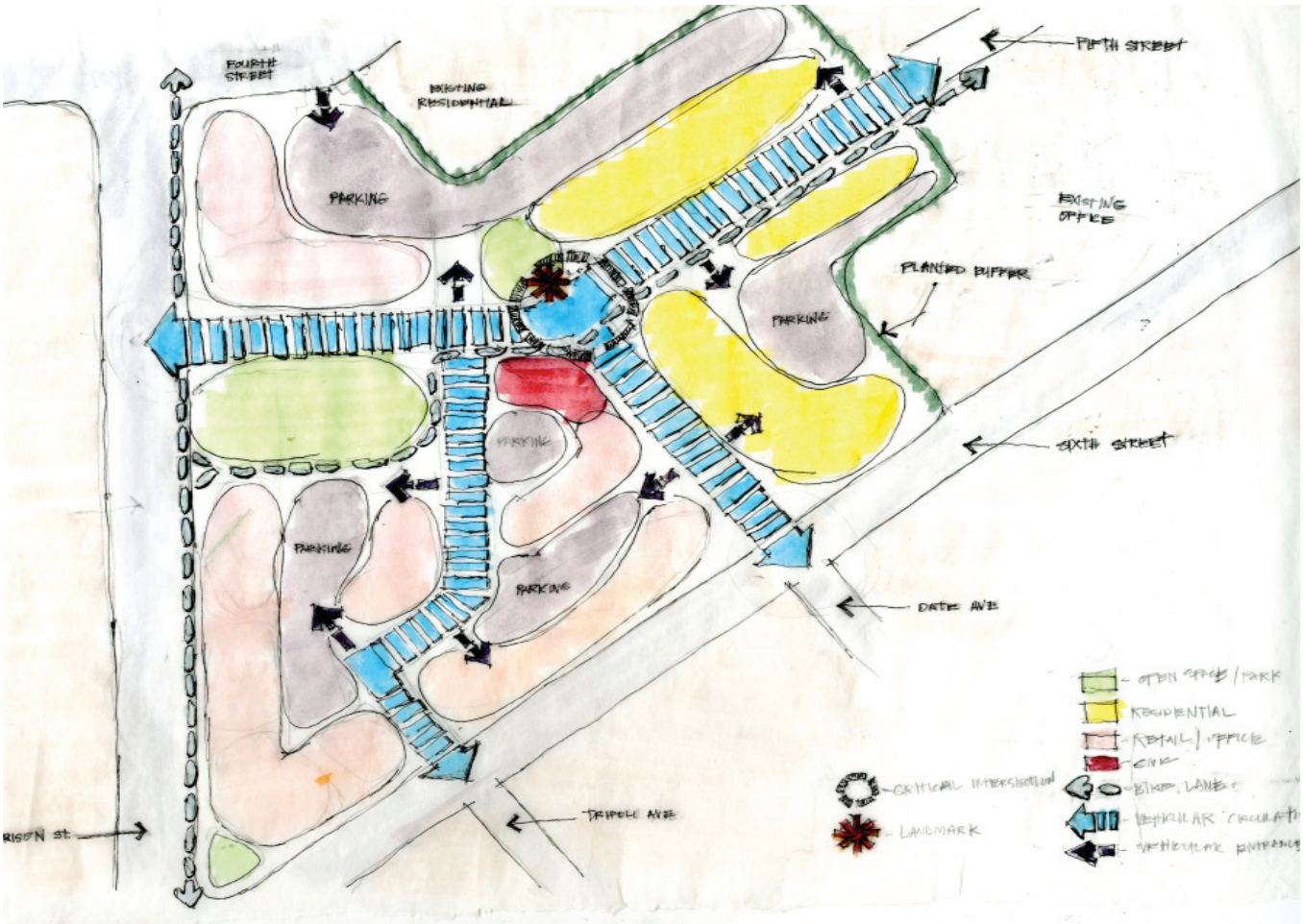


FIGURE 6.1: Proposed Bubble Diagram illustrates preliminary land uses, circulation, and general layout of Vista del Sol.

6.3 Illustrative Site Plan

FIGURE 6.2: Illustrative Site Plan

6.4 Land Uses

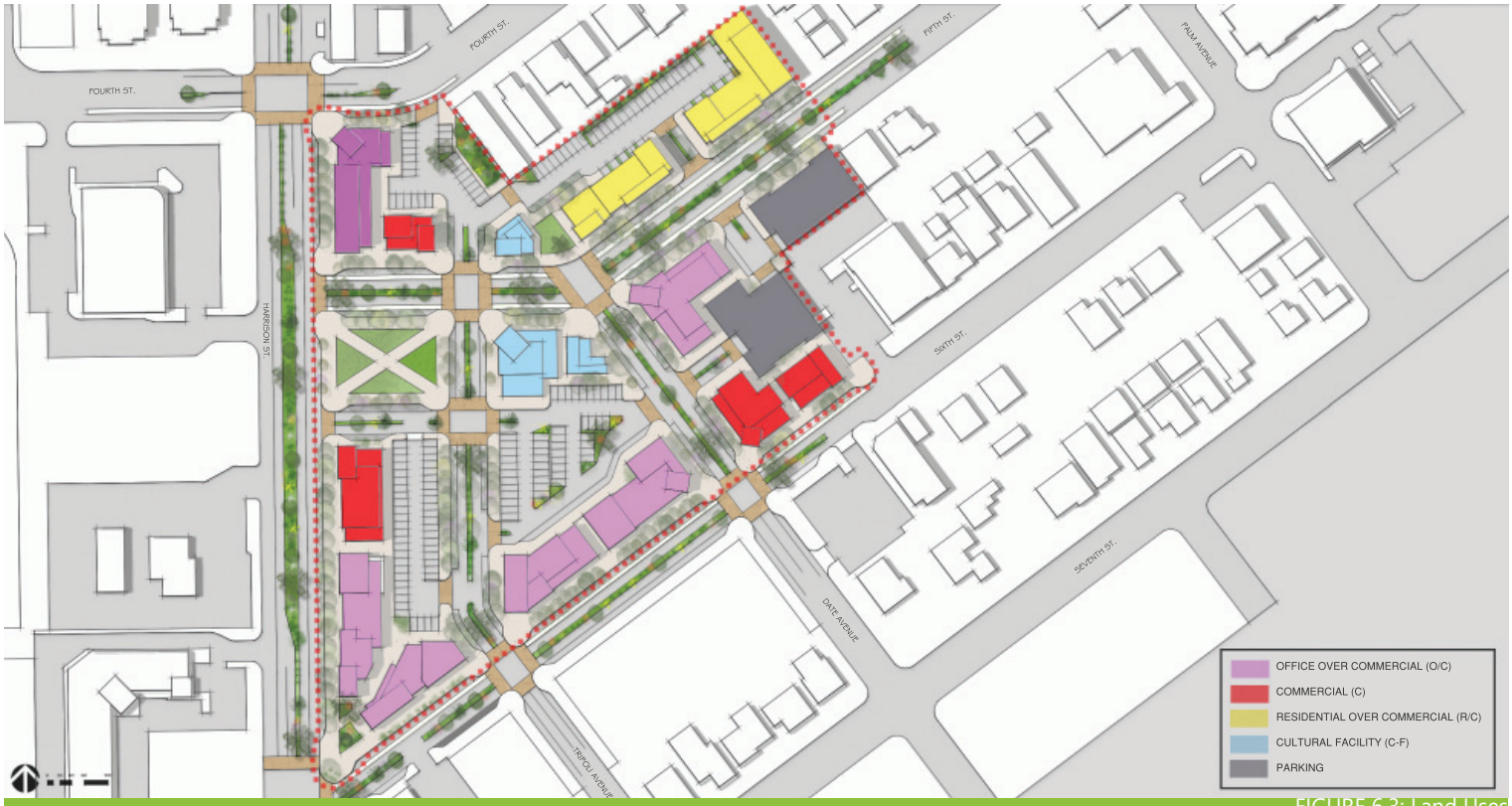


FIGURE 6.3: Land Uses

The following land uses in the Proposed Site Plan provides the city's core with a mixture of uses that encourage commercial and pedestrian activity in the area, transforming the vacant land into the central hub of the city.

The Proposed Site Plan supports the 2035 General Plan and Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan's land use designation that will transform the General Commercial (C-G) site, to the downtown center that includes a diverse selection of uses. The vision includes a design that accommodates condo-style multifamily housing, commercial, office, cultural facilities, and open space. It proposes mixed use buildings along Sixth St. and Fifth St. with commercial on the bottom and office units on top. On Fifth St., towards the downtown Core, higher density commercial-retail uses include commercial in the ground floor and single and multifamily units in the upper floors. Cultural facilities are situate at the core of the development such as a gym, art gallery, and a public theater for public events and performances. Adjacent to the cultural facilities, and at the critical intersection of Fifth and Date Avenue, the vision proposes open space to serve as a central pedestrian and active stop for visitors and residents. Additionally, an open space is strategically placed at center of the development along Harrison St. This open space is easily seen and approachable, as well as attractive and active scene to passerby traffic on Harrison St. Lastly, two parking structures are proposed behind commercial and office use structures to minimize street frontage to Sixth St., while they are also within walking distance to the most active uses such as open spaces and cultural facilities. At this location the parking structures are also conveniently placed across the multifamily units.

6.5 Vehicular Ciculation

The Vista del Sol vision encourages all modes of transportation. However, due to the high accessibility to the Harrison corridor, the vision prioritizes to calm traffic, and at the same time be highly accessible to vehicular traffic. Vehicle access to the development along the main streets (Harrison, Fifth, and Sixth St.) is designed to minimize the pedestrian environment, generally locating parking lots internally to blocks and accessed via side streets (Date and Tripoli Avenue), therefore minimizing the number of intrusions on the sidewalks adjacent to buildings. The streets shown in Figure are arranged to continue the existing grid pattern, continuing the pattern provides for greater mobility and ease of navigation within and to the site. All street widths in the Vision remain un-altered, however vehicular lanes are reduced to meet the minimum street widths to accommodate other circulation amenities to make it more pedestrianly fond. Figures 6.5, 6.6 and 6.7 show the typologies street sections, and demonstrate added street features such as parallel parking, bicycle lanes, and raised planted medians; all done to fit existing road widths.

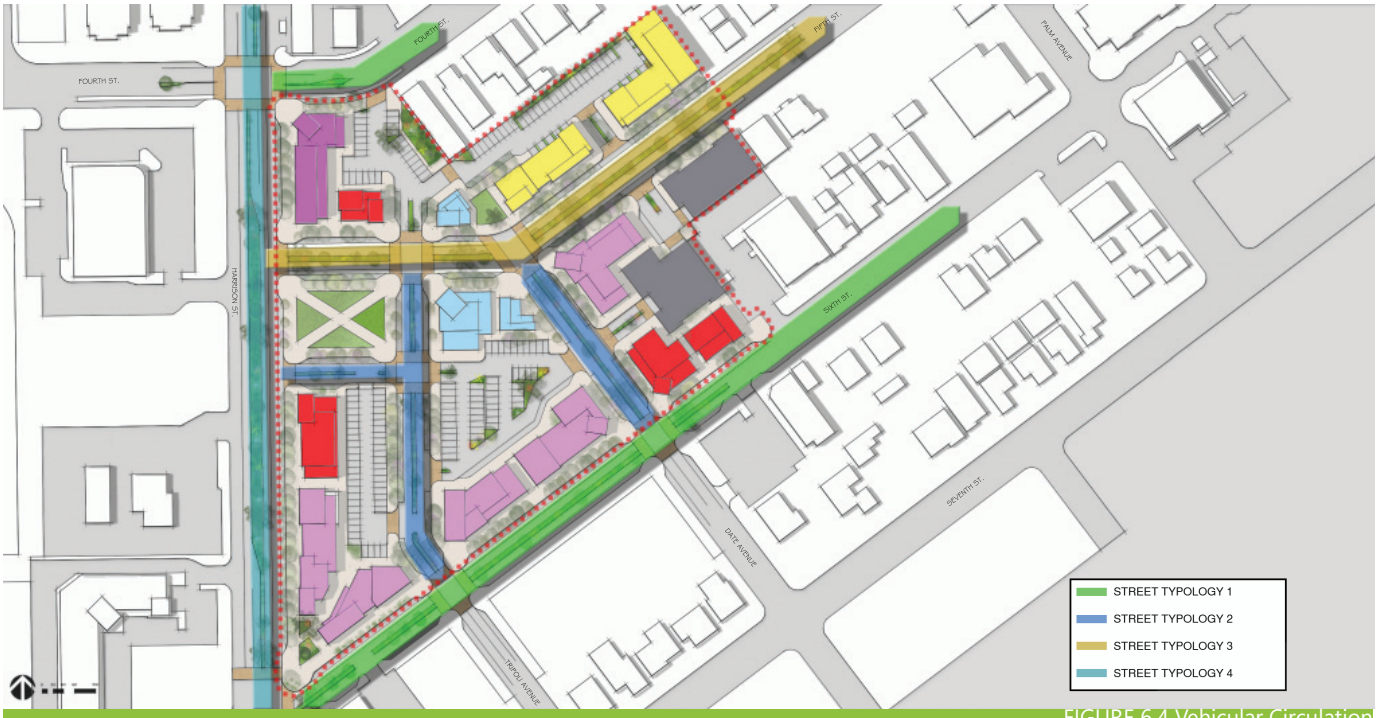


FIGURE 6.4 Vehicular Circulation

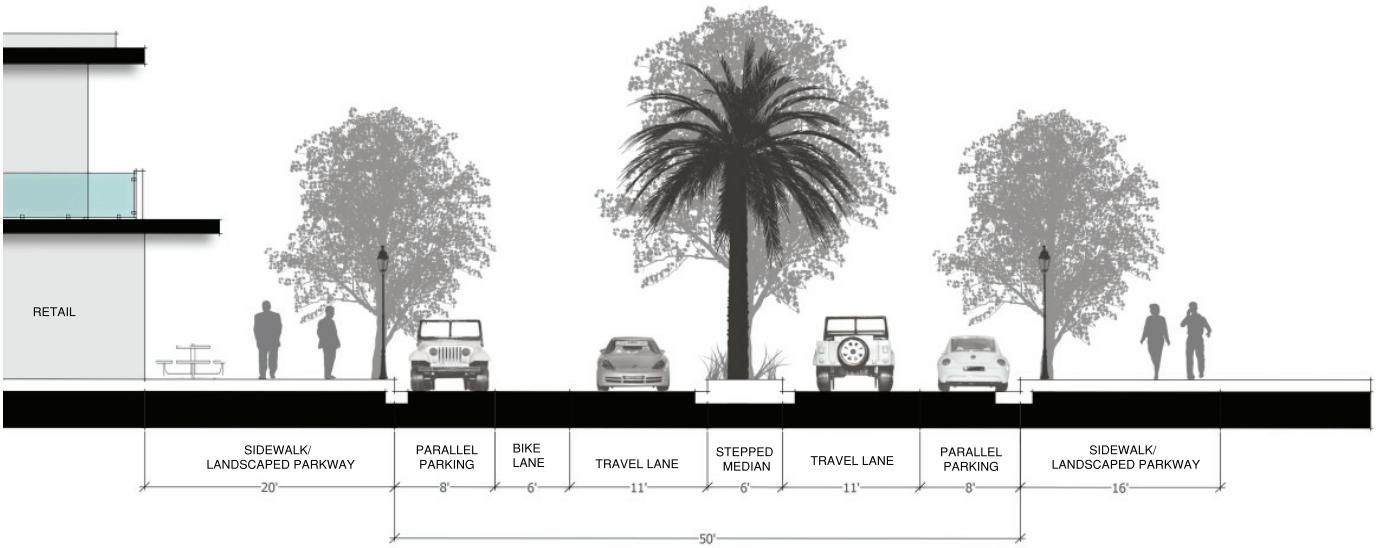


FIGURE 6.5: Street Type1

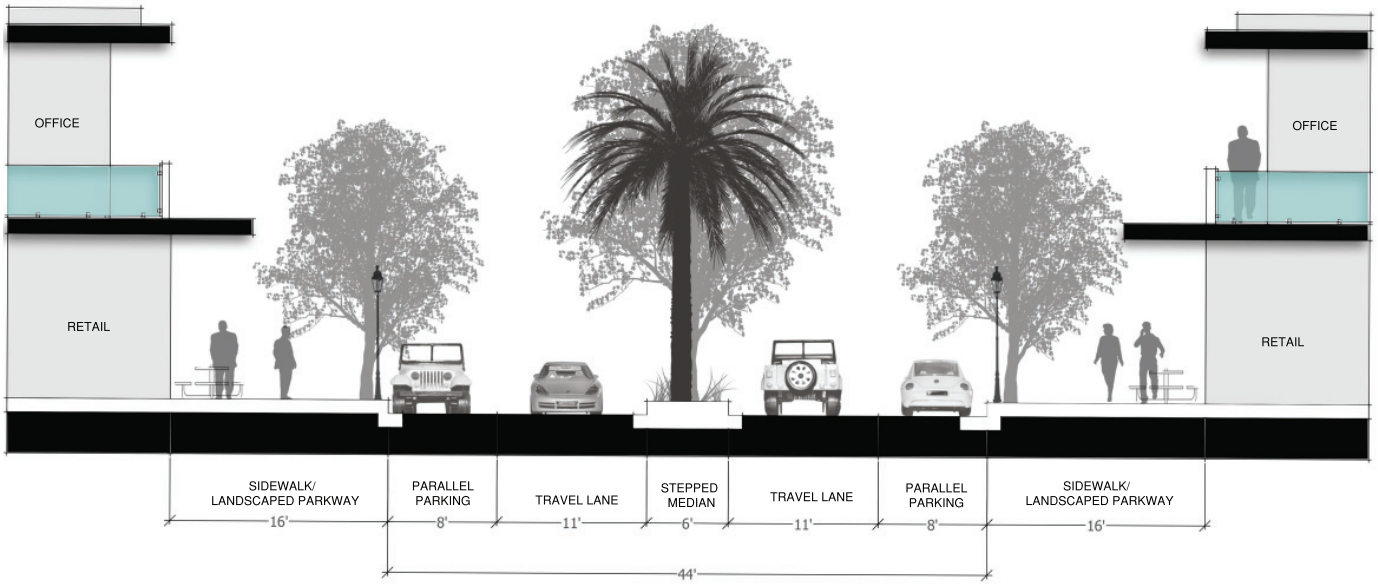


FIGURE 6.6: Street Type 2

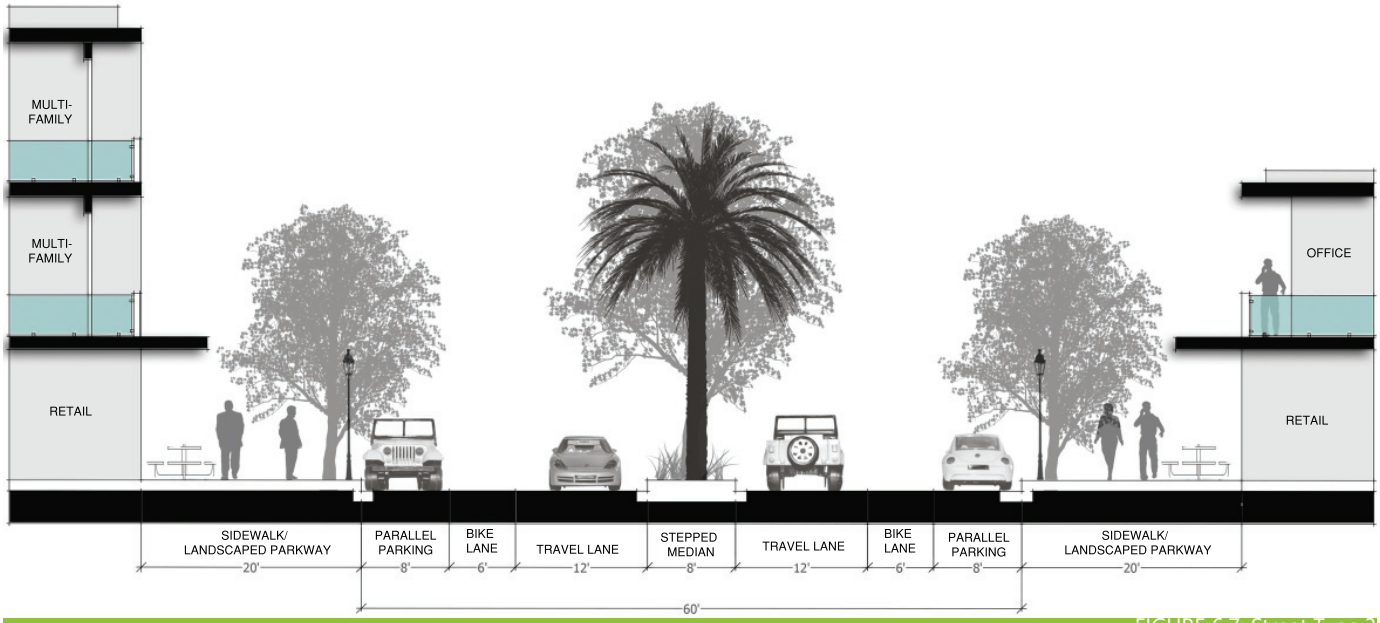


FIGURE 6.7: Street Type 3

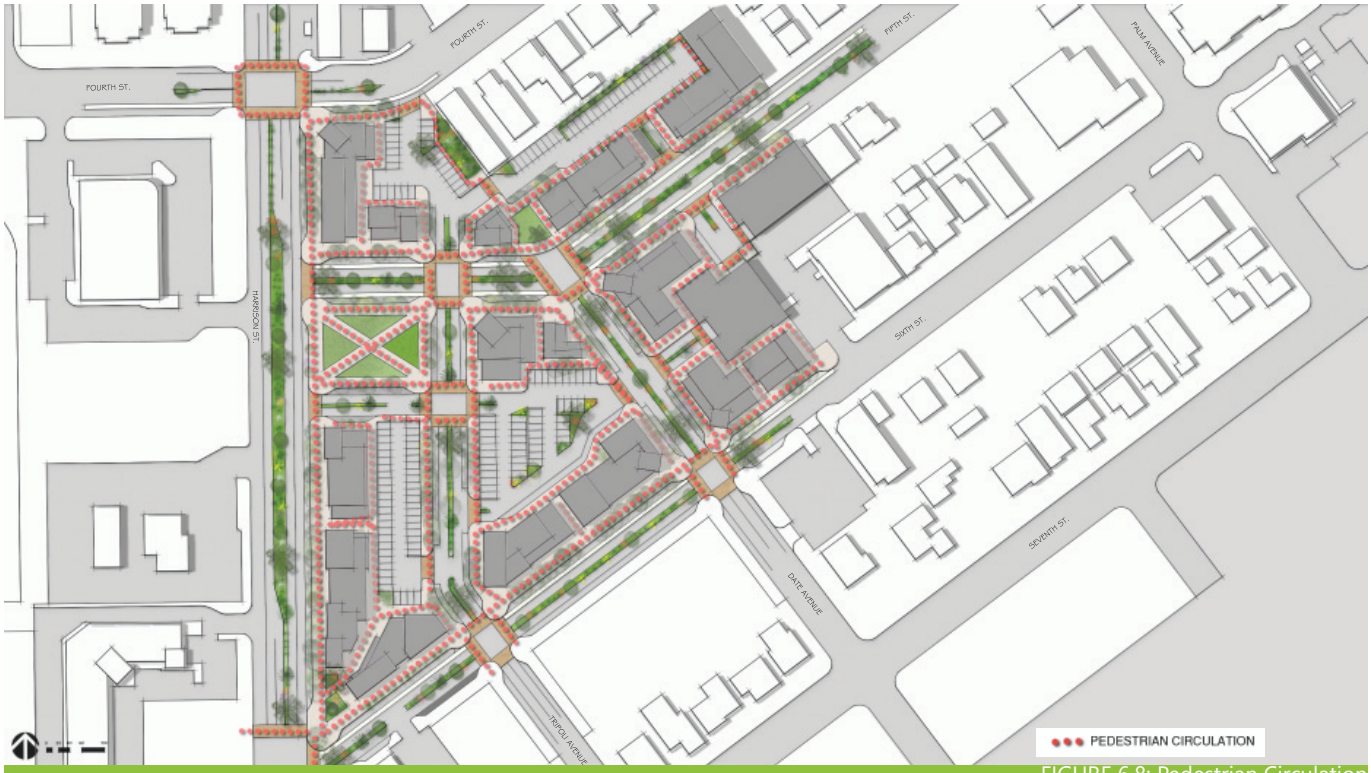


FIGURE 6.8: Pedestrian Circulation

6.5.2 Pedestrian Circulation

The vision provides a pedestrian oriented atmosphere that encourages visitors and residents to park once and access all uses on foot. Blocks are kept relatively the same size to the downtown which are no longer than 400 feet long. Cross-walks include pedestrian oriented radiuses, and are covered with brick paving to add detail and contrast from vehicular lanes. Longer blocks include mid-bock paseos to ensure a high degree and connectivity to pedestrians. Sidewalks are wide, 16 to 20 ft., on both sides of the streets and include trees planted in grates or landscaped planters, canopies embedded to the architecture, outdoor dining, and corner plazas.

6.3 Bicycle Circulation

The Vista del Sol Vision includes painted Class II bicycle lanes on Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Streets to encourage easier access to the development and to the downtown. Bike lanes within the development and along Harrison are Class III, and focus less on separated bike lanes and use "sharrows" to indicate the bicyclist's access to the right of way.

FIGURE 6.9: Bicycle Circulation

6.6 Proposed Massing

FIGURE 6.10 : Bird's eye with proposed massing and land uses

6.7 Development Table

BLDG	# OF STORIES	GROUNDFLOOR USE	UPPER FLOOR(S) USE	FOOTPRINT SQ. FT.	TOTAL SQ. FT.
1	2	Commercial	Office	5,887	11,774
2	2	Commercial	Office	7,920	15,840
3	2	Commercial	Commercial	5,990	11,980
4	2	Commercial	Office	7,009	14,018
5	2	Commercial	Commercial	2,560	5,120
6	1	Cultural Facility	N/A	1,789	1,789
7	2	Commercial	Multifamily	2,145	4,290
8	3	Commercial	Multifamily	4,425	13,275
9	3	Commercial	Multifamily	9,553	28,689
10	2	Commercial	Office	7,090	14,180
11	2	Commercial	Commercial	4,129	8,250
12	2	Commercial	Commercial	3,131	6,262
13	1	Cultural Facility	N/A	1,720	1,720
14	2	Cultural Facility	N/A	5,213	5,213
15	2	Commercial	Office	7,740	15,480
16	2	Commercial	Office	6,642	13,284
			TOTAL	**82,294**	**171,142**

	PARKING REQUIRED	PARKING PROVIDED
Office over Commerical	338	338
Residential over Commercial	102	104
Commercial	126	126
Cultural Facility	34	36
Total	**601**	**607**

6.8 Special Amenities

To enhance the pedestrian environment throughout the Vista del Sol Vision, the following amenities are proposed:

Pedestrian Amenities

Sidewalks do not only serve as arterials for pedestrian circulation, they also serve as places to gather and enjoy the scene. To make sidewalks more vibrant, the vision incorporates streetscape enhancements within the setback area includes street furniture, stoops, porches, planters, street furniture, canopies, and awnings. Such amenities will encourage pedestrian activity and make sidewalks more attractive.

FIGURE 6.11: Pedestrian Amenities

FIGURE 6.12: Native Landscaping

Landscaping Amenities

Landscaping throughout the project consists of primarily desert and other low moderate water use plants that complement the desert environment. The proposed tree palette includes Tipuan Tipu Trees, and Mexican and Mediterranean Fan Palms. The shrub palette includes Bougainvillea, Lantana, and Yucca, among others.Additionally, vines such as the Calliandra Tweedi and Barbara Karst are envisioned as decorative feature to add detail to walls. The perimeter area along Sixth St. and Fifth St. is proposed to be landscaped with numerous trees and shrubs on all raised planted medians.

Adaptive Street Signage

FIGURE 6.13 Automobile scale signage adjacent to vehicular arterials.

In order to appeal to passerby motorist and preserve the Vista Del Sol's pedestrian environment, two scales of signage are layered on the development. Signs should be placed perpendicularly to buildings and at a height comfortable to be read by both pedestrian and automobiles. Large signs should be along Harrison St, (See Figure 6.13), the smaller, more human scaled signs along pedestrian arterials within the perimeter of the development to maximize their effectiveness.

Conclusion

The vision demonstrates how the existing vacant lot could begin to transfer towards a more walkable development pattern in the surrounding area. The vision would expand retail opportunities and further define Harrison St. and the downtown as a pedestrian-friendly mixed-use area envisioned in the 2014 General Plan Update and the Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan. Laplaza

The vision embodies a design that rehabilitates downtown's gateway creating a unique sense of place and a needed renovation to the site. The vision re-imagines the vacant lot as a gateway to the downtown corridor that is easily approachable for residents and visitors to live, play, and shop. It creates opportunities for residents and visitors to use alternative modes of transportation such as bicycling and walking by stressing on the importance of pedestrian connections and amenities throughout the site.

Development is oriented on the new internal roadway extensions of Fifth, Date, and Tripoli Ave that create a pedestrian oriented experience Pedestrians will feel safer walking around the area with the increased activity along sidewalks, cultural facilities, and open spaces. In addition, local and surrounding businesses and retailers will benefit from the increased activity.

Compact single and multi-family uses along Fifth St. will give citizens a one of a kind living experience in the City of Coachella. It will attract people looking to live in an active and dense area that gives you an opportunity to minimize the necessity for an automobile. Residents will have access to the mix of uses offered by the Vista del Sol Vision, in addition to existing surrounding uses. This will promote a healthier lifestyle and encourage sustainable modes of transportation.

Lastly, elements such as the cultural facilities and open spaces will enrich the city's culture and create a unique setting in the City and in the region. It will attract visitors from other parts of the Coachella Valley, serving as a catalyst to revive the downtown corridor. The Vista del Sol Vision will ultimately be a place to shop, live, work, play, and celebrate the city's culture.

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